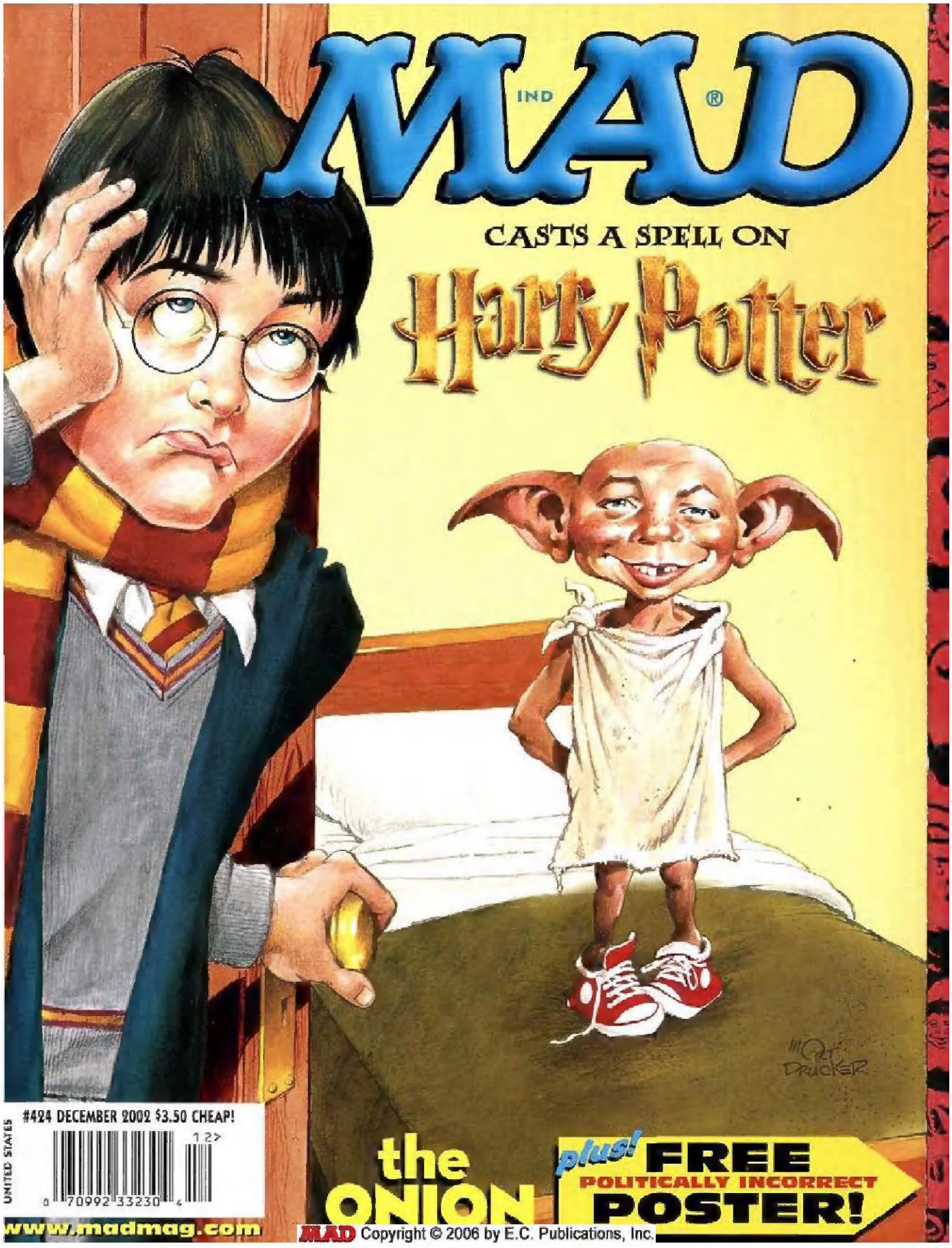
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THE SUCCESS OF THIS MILITARY ACTION HAS NOT YET BEEN RATED
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NOVEMBER 27

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50 YEARS OF STUPIDITY!

DECEMBER 2002 NUMBER 424

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Just because you put your foot down doesn't mean it won't end up in your mouth!

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ARTIST: SCOTT BRICHER PHOTOS: AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS
WRITERS: ARIE KAPLAN AND SCOTT SONNEBORN

FRONT COVER ARTIST:
MORT DRUCKER

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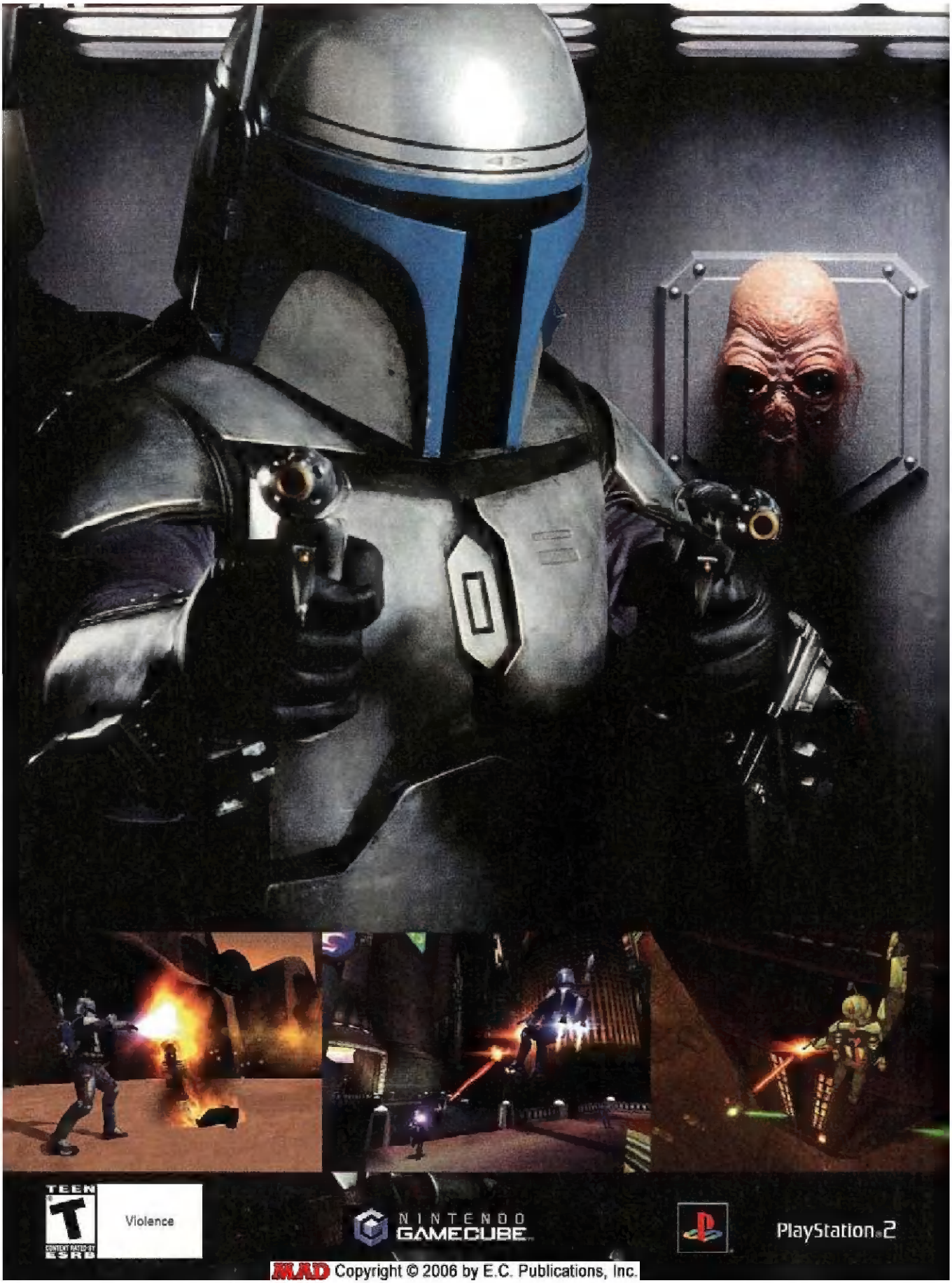

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MAD FAN OF THE MONTH

Ben (left) and Josh at the History Fair

This month, we are starting a new feature called *MAD Fan of the Month*! We kick off this splendid new segment with a photo of Ben Weide and Josh Birch of Jacksonville, FL who sent in the following photo and letter:

Enclosed, please find a copy of our History Fair submission. The topic was "Revolutions in America." While we got voted best in the class and moved on to the next competition level, we didn't get far as the judges realized this was pure trash and had no historic value!

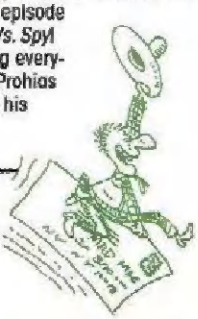
If you can find someone to take a picture of you and your MAD collection, send it to: MAD Fan of the Month, c/o MAD Magazine, 1700 Broadway, NY, NY 10019!

A POKE IN THE SPY

I was reading Spy Vs. Spy in MAD #420 and at the end the girl killed both spies — that sucked! Next issue, Black Spy and White Spy should work together to kill the girl. Maybe they could bury her in sand up to her neck and have an army of flesh-eating ants eat her alive.

Tyler Cameron, Nova Scotia, Canada

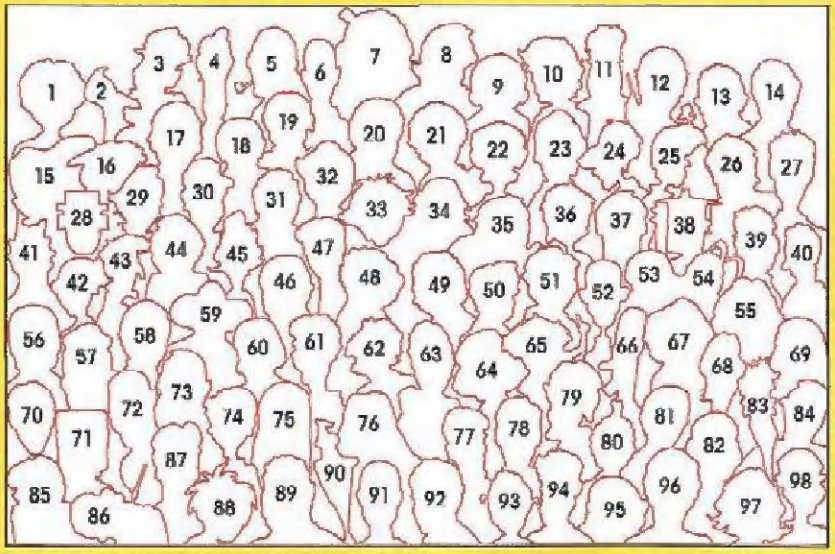
Ty Bo — Thanks for your interesting suggestion. As you may know, the spies have been appearing in the pages of MAD for the past 42 years. Every issue the Black Spy and the White Spy battle each other for spy supremacy. It's been that way, as we said, for some 42 years (THAT'S THE FREAKIN' FORMULA!), and if we do say so ourselves, it's been a successful formula — sworn bitter enemies fighting against each other to a perpetual stalemate. But now, let's just throw 42 years of treasured history out the window because Tyler Cameron has had some brilliant creative stroke and wants to team the two spies up for what will undoubtedly be the final ruinous episode of the beloved *Spy Vs. Spy*! Thanks for destroying everything, Tyler. Antonio Prohias must be spinning in his grave! —Ed.



CARICATURE FLAWS

In MAD #423, to celebrate our big 50th anniversary, we included a free poster depicting many of the Usual Gang of Idiots! We couldn't figure out who half the people were and we work here! So this issue, we've included a handy-dandy schematic to identify all of the Idiots! Who knew Rick Tulka was so dreamy? Enjoy!

1. Jenette Kahn
2. Antonio Prohias
3. Jack Davis
4. Don Martin
5. Dave Berg
6. Harvey Kurtzman
7. William M. Gaines
8. Nick Meglin
9. Al Jaffee
10. Mort Drucker
11. Sergio Aragonés
12. George Woodbridge
13. Angelo Torres
14. Paul Levitz
15. Joe Orlando
16. Paul Peter Porges
17. Bob Clarke
18. Norman Mingo
19. Will Elder
20. Al Feldstein
21. John Ficarra
22. Dick DeBartolo
23. Frank Jacobs
24. Paul Coker
25. Duck Edwing
26. Irving Schild
27. Richard Williams
28. Max Brandel
29. Jack Rickard
30. Stan Hart
31. Jerry DeFuccio
32. Annie Gaines
33. John Putnam
34. Leonard Brenner
35. Charlie Kadau
36. Joe Raiola
37. Mike Snider
38. Peter Kuper
39. John Caldwell
40. Tom Cheney
41. Gerry Gersten
42. Dorothy Crouch
43. Lou Silverstone
44. Tom Koch
45. Frank Kelly Freas
46. Larry Siegel
47. Wally Wood
48. Basil Wolverton
49. Arnie Kogen
50. Desmond Devlin
51. Sam Viviano
52. Rick Tulka
53. Anthony Barbieri
54. Bill Wray
55. Nadina Simon
56. Roberto Parada
57. Mark Fredrickson
58. Bob Jones
59. John Severin
60. Harry North, Esq.
61. David Shayne
62. Monte Wolverton
63. Drew Friedman
64. Amy Vozeolas
65. Tom Bunk
66. James Warhola
67. Hermann Mejia
68. Russ Cooper
69. Scott Bricher
70. Mark Stutzman
71. C.F. Payne
72. James Bennett
73. Phil Hahn
74. Andrew J. Schwartzberg
75. Maria Wyche
76. Timothy Shamey
77. Tom Richmond
78. Dennis Snee
79. Barry Liebmann
80. Pat Merrell
81. Michael Gallagher
82. Ryan Flanders
83. Greg Leitman
84. P.C. Vey
85. Butch D'Ambrosio
86. Gary Hallgren
87. Darren Johnson
88. Amanda Conner
89. Ray Alma
90. Bob Staake
91. Scott Maiko
92. Dave Manak
93. Kevin Pope
94. Ricky Sprague
95. Jeff Kruse
96. Dave Croatto
97. Patty Dwyer
98. Brian Dumiak



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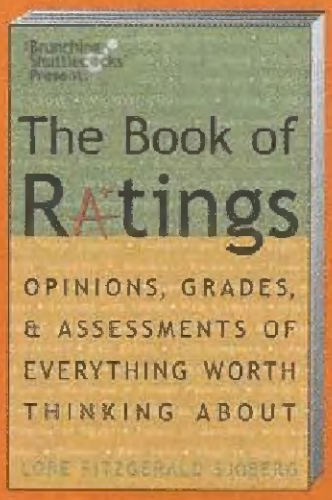
funny new stuff

from Three Rivers Press

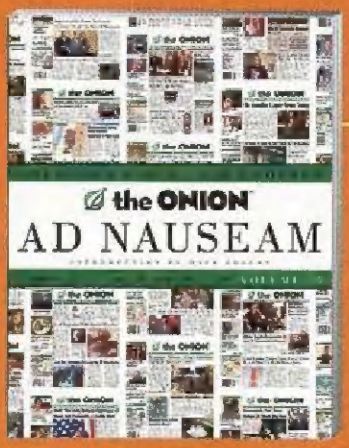

Branching Storylines Presents
The Book of Ratings
OPINIONS, GRADES, & ASSESSMENTS OF EVERYTHING WORTH THINKING ABOUT
LORE FITZGERALD SJÖBERG

You want judgmental? *Here's* judgmental!

Do you walk around snidely rating everything in your path? Teachers, TV shows, supermodels? Of course you do! But Lore Sjöberg has elevated this to an art, attaching letter grades to everything in sight, from breakfast cereals and Monopoly tokens to pizza toppings and plagues of Egypt. *The Book of Ratings* is hilariously arbitrary and undeniably compelling.

Confessions from the guy who created *Freaks and Geeks*

Ah, public school . . . dodgeball bombardments, hellish bus rides, insulting nicknames, ill-fated prom dates, and other highlights of an education in humiliation. Paul Feig recalls it all in side-splitting, cringe-inducing detail.



All the news that's fit to reprint

Onion fans rejoice! *The Onion Ad Nauseam* features everything published during *The Onion*'s thirteenth year: every news story, opinion piece, news in brief, horoscope . . . every hilarious word that appeared between October 2000 and October 2001. Includes loads of material no longer available online or anywhere else.

Wherever Books Are Sold

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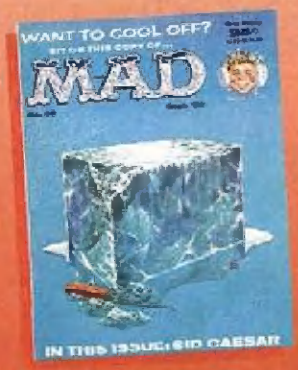
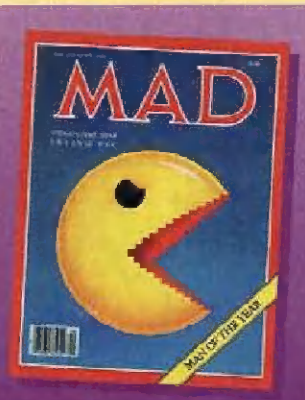
We asked readers to send a note telling us when they started subscribing to MAD and/or when they began reading it, in celebration of our 50th anniversary. We received so many responses we're only able to present a small sampling of them! Part one appeared in last month's issue. Without further ado, we present part two. Thanks to everyone for sharing their memories with us!



I remember buying my first issue on a trip with my family to Des Moines. It was issue #49 and the year was 1959.
— Lee Polikov, Bellevue, NB

I have been collecting MAD for 23 years (I'm 33). The very first time I laid my eyes on a issue, I decided to start collecting.
— Noel Butchart, Chapin, SC

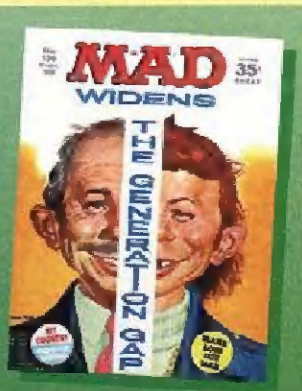
I first subscribed shortly after the magazine changed its format from that of a comic book. My late wife and I would fight over who got to read the magazine first when it arrived.
— Richard Bridgman, Newark, CA



I have been buying your magazine since I was seven years old. September, 1982 was the first issue I bought.
— Bryan Steward, via e-mail

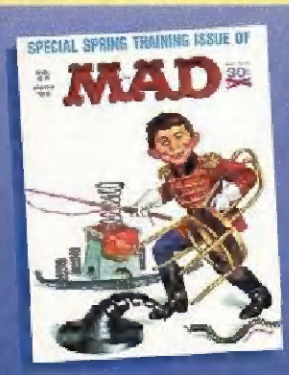
I believe I started my subscription with you the first years you accepted subscriptions in the 1960s. I had MAD #1, bought from a local newsstand when I was 15. My subscription has moved around substantially. I was in the military, so it has gone to California, Kentucky, Ohio, Washington, D.C., Paris, etc.
— John B. Catillet, via e-mail

I've been a subscriber for the last 12 years, but I haven't missed an issue since 1972, I was ten years old at the time.
— Frances Davies, Ontario, Canada



I have been a subscriber since #129, September, 1969. MAD has always been an important magazine to me, as nowhere else am I able to obtain such a clear definition of pop culture. In other words, even at the ripe old age of 47, I can keep up with the teenagers and twenty-somethings of today because by reading MAD, I'll be wise to their ways.
— Daniel Lovegren, Elk Grove, CA

I doubt I am the longest subscriber in Utah, but I have been a subscriber since I was 14 so I guess that makes 15 years! My sister asks me every year what I want for Christmas, I tell her "renew MAD!"
— Chris Horne, Murray, UT



My first issue was #89, September, 1964. I finally got up enough nerve to fill out the subscription card and it began with #95, June, 1965. There is no doubt that my sense of humor and general outlook on life has been greatly shaped by MAD. I can still remember on Yom Kippur 1965 after returning from temple, I was set for a long boring day. However, my MAD arrived in the mail that day (#99, December, 1965) and I was ecstatic.
— Hal J. Freiman, Scarsdale, NY

My first subscribed issue was #214, April, 1980. With 23 years of MADs in my possession, I'm probably one of Colorado's longest subscribers.
— Jere Barto, via e-mail

I have been subscribing to MAD for over 40 years. I was a subscriber in 1960. I am 52 years old and I spent 22 years in the army. When my eight issues a year came, I would always have to read it quickly so that it could be passed around the company. Sometimes I never saw it again.
— Larry Schwab, Phoenix, AZ

I subscribed in the early 50s, when it was a comic book. In the middle of my subscription you switched to a magazine format. You did not give me credit for a one-year subscription paid; since the new price was higher, you cut it short.
— Tom Reesor, Conway, SC

I actually purchased MAD #24 and I began subscribing with issue #33.
— Dick Commander, Chester, VA

I was on your subscription list for at least 20 years.
— Laura Pearlstein, Stoughton, MA

I'm 78 years old and have been receiving MAD since it first came out in 1952. The funny part is, I don't even read it! My husband orders it under my name!
— Helga Peterson, via e-mail

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WWW POLL: WHY CLONE WHEN YOU CAN MORPH?

WORLD NEWS WATCH

WWW.MIDWAY.COM — NOVEMBER 2002

Dr. Muto Revealed!

Meet The Man Behind The Morph

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Evil Geniuses Who Want To Rule It All

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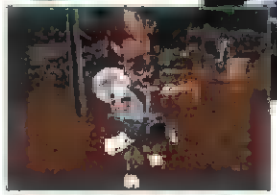
MAD SCIENCE WATCH

The Doctor Is In

Are You A Man Or A Mouse?
Morphants are strange creatures from a subatomic dimension. Dr. Muto's amazing Splitz Gun



Dr. Muto's arsenal of gizmos and gadgets would've been useful in such Looney Tunes cartoons as Duck Dodgers and the Super Dooley

Dr. Muto, the genius mad scientist whose latest experiment accidentally destroyed his home planet, has been the center of a media frenzy with the unveiling of his amazing new "Splitz Gun" technology. Muto's Splitz Gun enables him to mutate and morph with any living organism in order to accomplish tasks no human could achieve alone.

According to Muto, the Splitz Gun's morphing ability will be key in his attempts to rebuild his world. "I simply sample some DNA and 'BANG,' I morph into a mouse, spider, gorilla or any other creature I see fit to become," Muto madly muttered in an exclusive World News Watch interview. "It's not that I am a megalomaniac, I just want to play God."

Muto's technology is receiving so much attention and interest that he will begin selling the Splitz Gun through TV infomercials next month. Also, leading videogame publisher Midway has entered into an exclusive deal with the doctor for the release of an action/adventure videogame based on his bizarre and intriguing life and his Splitz Gun technology. Information about Muto's videogame, simply titled, "Dr. Muto," is revealed on www.drmuto.midway.com, which is a website devoted to Muto's universe of baffling puzzles, mind-bending devices, freakish monstrosities and twisted humor.

Defend yourself against deadly Rocket-Ship versus Chicken and other bizarre beasts of your mind, Professor Burnitall

Is Dr. Muto the 21st Century's Einstein, or just another malignant fudge for yourself this fall when "Dr. Muto" the videogame releases for next-generation videogame platforms.

PROFILE OF...

Professor Burnitall

As energy magnate of the Centralia solar system, Professor Burnitall has outperformed all expectations for energy production by strip-mining and pillaging the natural resources of every planet in the system. He's a stalwart ruling energy while demolishing a society. But the genius Dr. Burnitall has become a wrinkle in his explosive plans. We caught up with the professor recently, who told us, "I'm a maniac bent on destroying my beautiful energy empire. That ridiculous Dr. Muto believes he can build a planet from scraps of DNA and trivia. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! PAIN! Burnitall went on to say that Muto is a renegade terrorist and "My force will stop at nothing to destroy the heretic infidel, as I make WHAT creature he shapes himself into!"

RATING PENDING RP Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for Rating Information

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NINTENDO GAMECUBE

Coming Soon
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THE DEVIL & MS. VOSBURGH

I never thought your stupidity could be at all helpful, I was wrong! My mother (we call her the Aztec Goddess of Suffering) is about to move into a new house with the address of 666! I was worried that something terrible might happen to her there and she might end up living with me — and worst of all start cooking again! But no, you nuts have saved me! I'm confident that the gold crucifix, the pounds of garlic and the silver bullet from "Mr. Fix-It Tackles Your Occult and Paranormal Home Repair Problems" (MAD #419) will ensure the crazy old chick stays where she belongs — in her own house!

Diane Vosburgh, Lombard, IL

Princess Di — We're glad to be of service. Tell your mom we hope she enjoys her new home, especially the redroom, redroom, redroom! —Ed.

P.X., I HATE YOU

I am currently stationed in Bosnia Herzegovina and happened to pick up issue #421 at the PX. I was disgusted when I read page 26, "The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Official Edict on Pedophile Priests." I'm a soldier proudly serving my country to protect all freedoms, including free speech, but it's unfortunate that people like Mr. Devlin would abuse his right by writing an attack on Catholics. Mr. Devlin should be ashamed of himself and MAD should be ashamed of themselves. I'll pray that Mr. Devlin's soul doesn't rot in hell. I will no longer buy your magazine and I will encourage other American Catholic soldiers to boycott your magazine.

Spc. Quezada, 28th M.P. Co
Camp Eagle Base

Que — Thank you for your letter. Pray all you like, but if you do it in a church, we have these words of advice: watch out for some of dem priests. You follow? —Ed.

BLANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

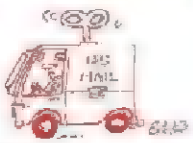
In MAD #423 we printed a special bonus MAD crossword puzzle. We couldn't figure out half the answers and we work here! Even with the answer key, we're still stumped! Enjoy!

Make A Dumb Wish Foundation™

I need a wish granted and the *Make A Dumb Wish Foundation*™ writers are the only ones equipped to the task. In MAD #413, you printed a picture of Osama bin Laden with a rusty nail driven into his eye. My wish is that you print a picture of him with a red-hot rod driven through his head.

Jason Hodne, Pine Bush, NY

J-Ho — Even though it's not exactly a dumb wish, who are we to stand in the way of your splendid little request? On behalf of the entire board of the *Make A Dumb Wish Foundation*™, enjoy! —Ed.



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Paul Levitz, September 9, 2002

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THEY'RE OFF TO BE THE WIZARDS DEPT.
Teachers and parents agree that J.K. Rowling's four Harry Potter books have energized the world of publishing. Single-handedly, they've reintroduced children to the unparalleled joys that only reading can bring. So what do they do next? They turn them into movies, so all those lazy bastard kids can revert right back to their usual drooling, catatonic state. Great! So much for the joys of reading! In fact, chances are none of you are even bothering to read this whole boring paragraph with all these words. The ones that are left, anyway...
Harry
I am Albus Doubledork! On behalf of Halfwits and its professors, but mostly the holders of plunging AOL Time Warner stock, I welcome you! This promises to be a rich and rewarding sequel...er, I mean, semester! This school was built on one thing: tradition! A certain way of doing things! And that's why we pretty much repeat the exact same plot as the first book!
That withered stick insect next to me is Professor McConjugal, the school's second-in-command! Now, considering that my idea of leadership is letting Druckermort, the most evil wizard alive, use the school's basement like a time-share resort whenever he feels like dropping by, just imagine what a total mess she must be!
Over there is Rubiks Haggard! Seeing our freakishly enormous groundskeeper year after year lets the students know one thing: Vince McMahon is not hiring! This 400-pound Furby has a very special, close relationship with different species of animals. Many of them live in his beard!
HAIR CARE MY WAY BY CARROT TOP
Runt Queasy is one of our second-year students. His dad's an ineffectual doofus, his older brother is a self-important big shot, and his little sister, Ninny, is a lovesick dummy who's the personal assistant to the most evil wizard in history! All of a sudden, Harry Plodder's family looks good!
Next we have Herwhiny Grungy. Nobody knows who put the wand up her butt! She may be half witch, half human, but she's 100% pest! She's such a colossally irritating know-it-all that she should be web designing one of
rry Plodder fan websites!
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Plodder

AND THE LAMEST OF SEQUELS

ARTIST: Tom RICHMOND WRITER: D[illegible] DEVLIN

That scowling curmudgeon sticking pins in his Harry Plodder doll is **Prof. Severely Snapped!** He's an **embittered wannabe** who desperately wishes HE could be the **#1 man in charge!** But he'll never get the chance because **nobody likes him.** Think of him as the **wizard world's Al Gore!**

There in the corner is **Tom Riddler, semi-invisible bad guy!** He's really the evil **Druckermort,** but uses a **phony name!** He writes **misleading messages** back and forth with a young girl, **Ninny Queasy,** through an **incredible magic diary.** Why doesn't he just use IMs on **AOL,** like every other **perv** in the country?

Our newest teacher is **Corduroy Pockmark,** author of the **world's phoniest biography!** Every page is designed to **disguise** the fact that he's an **egomaniacal fraud.** He's the **Rudy Giuliani of wizardry!** He's written **dozens** of books, **all** with the **same problem:** he uses the letter "I" more than the other **25 letters** in the alphabet combined!

And the star of our little fiasco is **Harry Plodder!** He's got **incredible wizard powers** locked **deep inside.** He also has a lot of **personal pain** locked **deep inside.** In fact, **everything's inside** with this **blank-faced little stiff** – especially some **acting talent** which he's yet to unk

He's actually a **normal preteen kid** with **normal concerns!** Regular kids worry about **getting zits** and **blackheads.** Harry worries about the **glowing lightning bolt scar** on his **forehead** that he got the night his

But there **is something** that makes him **very different** from **everyone else.** And it's ***not*** his **mysterious past** or **unique talents.** It's that he's a **12-year-old** who actually ***likes*** being at **school!** What a **total wuss!**

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This stinks! Today is my birthday and nobody remembered!
Well, at least the Doodlys gave you a cake for your 12th birthday!
Big deal! It's the same cake I got for my 11th birthday, my 10th birthday, and my 9th birthday! That's not green icing on top!
Slobby is here to warn Harry Plodder! Harry Plodder must not go back to Halfwits!
And I'm here to warn Slobby the Elf that if he keeps talking in that weird stilted language, he stands a good chance of being the most annoying computer-generated movie character since Jar Jar Binks!
Hop in, Harry! We're busting you out!
How does this thing work?
The same way every action sequence in every Hollywood movie works! We all shout "Whoooaa!" a lot!
Oh, Harry, you're so manly! I love to watch your muscles ripple!
Who? Me?
Don't forget that I've spent my whole life in a house filled with wussbag wizards like my dad and Runt! So my personal definition of "macho" is anyone who can beat up SpongeBob Squarepants!
Ahhh, Harry Plodder! Come up to the front of the line and take a free copy of any one of my books — Gone with the Wand, A Farewell to Hairy Arms, Tuesdays with More Eels, Dragon Soup for the Soul, Make Way for Dungeons, The Witches of Madison County — any of them! How about one of my elf-help books? Sorry for the tiny selection, but my hand cramped up for a long weekend last July! To make it up to you, how would you like to pay the membership fee to join my exclusive fan club? You can be the 11th member!
Who are the first ten members?
Me!
Oof! We're stuck! We'll miss the Halfwits train!
Look at the weirdos and freaks who are making it through. How come we're being stopped?
That's Homeland Security for you!
Hold it there, sir. Are you trying to sneak an explosive device onboard the Halfwits train?
A dinky little bomb? You fool! I'm holding the Sphere of Sphagulus, which will shred the fabric of our universe and destroy all existence!
Very sorry, sir. You can pass!
10
Oof! The suspension on this flying car is terrible!
We could be worse off!
How?
We could be traveling on Amtrak!
WHACK!
SMASH
WHAM!
POW!

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Allow me to explain the Halfwits "points system." Each of the four houses — Griddlecake, Flavorflav, Ramensoup and Slipnslide — gains or loses points as the semester goes on. It's a great way to build school morale — except for the 75% of our students who get to end the year as miserable losers! Points can be added or deducted at will, according to the plot! And in the event of a dispute, the final decision goes to the French ice skating judge from the last Olympics!

I can't decide which classes to sign up for. Potions lessons? Divination lessons? Flying lessons?

Try acting lessons! You're no Haley Joel Osment!

Uh-oh! Look out! Runt just got a Yowler!

How dare you drive the flying car to school! You could have been killed! Or worse, we might have had to pay for the tree! I bought you some new underpants — extra snug! And they're camouflage to disguise any stains!

You're supposed to be the most powerful young wizard in the world? Why can't you fix your eyesight and lose the dorky glasses?

Oh, oh, oh YEAH?

Since I have no way of knowing who started this argument, I'm forced to deduct points alphabetically! 10 points off Harry Plodder and Griddlecake for arguing!

Huh? But "Harry Plodder" comes *after* "Drano Malformed"!

Still in a fighting mood, eh, Plodder? Make it 20 points off!

Crappe! Goy! The Chamber of Secretions will be opened this semester! The heir of Slipnslide will reveal himself! We'll enjoy 10,000 years of unstoppable power!

We might even get big-ger rooms!

Crappe, you're a classic example of what happens when a school hands out too many athletic scholarships!

Don't worry about gifts, children! What do you get for the man who already has everything, not counting the cervical vertebrae necessary to support the weight of a human head? Come in! Have fun! After we're done playing Pin the Tail on the Undead Donkey, you can join our game of Musical Coffins!

Weird! I've never been to an annual celebration of death before!

I have! My parents once took me to Wrigley Field to see the Chicago Cubs on Opening Day!

Drat! Students have been turning to stone, and now there are two fresh victims — Nearly-Headless Schmuck and Professor McConjugal!

I'm not petrified, jerk! This is my normal expression!

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Prof. Doubledork! What happened? Were you almost petrified? An attack by Druckermort? Bad clams?
None of those! You know those collectible wizard cards where the person moves around inside the picture? That friggin' Drano Malformed got one of mine and stuck it into the spokes of his bicycle! He beat the S@#$% out of me!
These attacks didn't start until Plodder showed up! And he has the perfect motive! If he can make everyone else in the school lifeless and frozen, suddenly his rotten acting doesn't look so bad!
Burn him! He's a witch!
We're ALL witches, dummy!
But...I battled Druckermort and saved everyone! That was just four months ago! Doesn't anyone remember that?
Yeah, vaguely! But what have you done for us lately?
REST ROOMS 1.5 mi.
I know you Squamish players hate giving urine samples. But there are rumors about steroids and supplements infiltrating the sport! We must test your systems for illegal substances!
Eye of dragon... tarantula hair...aardvark drippings... gnome sweat...okay, he's clean!
Foul! Foul! How can Slipnslide train their players to be so vicious?
Easy! Look at their coach!
I'll eat your children! I'll punch your nosebone into your brain! Abwa-ca-dabwa!
Nothing to worry about, Harry, my boy! It's just 37 eensy-weensy compound fractures! And I'm sure your missing fingers are around here someplace! Luckily for you, I have vast experience in medicine! Before I went into wizardry, I worked at a major HMO!
HELLL-LL-LLLPPPP!!!!
Let's go, Plodder! Your arm's back in shape! Afraid to duel?
I challenge you to a staring contest!
What kind of a duel is that?
My specialty! In the first movie, I pretty much stared for two and a half hours straight! And in this one, baby, I'm going for the record!
Potrzebie! Axolotl! Shakira!
Yahtzee! Qatar! Häagen-Dazs! Viagra!
HIYA!
Typical! Two boy rivals on the verge of puberty and the first thing they do is whip out their wands! Do you see anything subliminal in that?
Nah. It's like Dr. Freud wrote, "Sometimes an enchanted death snake is just an enchanted death snake"!

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A person who can communicate with snakes and reptiles should not be enrolled in Halfwits. He should be in law school!
I keep hearing voices... but from where?
Out there, in the movie seats! Maybe the third grade book geeks give a newt's patoot about how "faithful to the original" Neville Longbottom's haircut is! But for the parents who have to take them, this ponderous epic is slow-drip torture!
ENOUGH... STOP... FOREVER... MURDER... HATE
NEVER ENDS... MUST PEE...!!!
We need hair from Drano and his two goons! It completes my Presto Change-o Potion! We will be transformed into those rich jerks and go undercover! We can infiltrate their fancy parties, wear their expensive clothes, mingle with the important people!
Just one question: do we have to change back?
Harry, there's one thing you need to know about these stories. If something is mentioned 20 times during the book, it's not important. But if it's mentioned just once, the whole story depends on it! Which reminds me, I'd like you to meet my pet phoenix, Squawkes. He has amazing powers!
Amazing? Like what?
Like, anything J.K. Rowling needs to throw in just to get through the plot! That's the amazing part!
NOTE IMPORTANT PLOT ELEMENT
ATTENTION AUDIENCE: FORESHADOWING IN PROGRESS
The potion we drank worked, Harry! We look just like Drano's goons! But Herwhiny's potion backfired! Do you think we should take her to the hospital because of the side effects?
Nah! She just threw out her back trying to clean her butt with her tongue!
This school is a mess! Ninny Queasy has been kidnapped! There are dead roosters all over the place! And Haggard says he wants to be "more than friends"!
I'll help you, Harry! I'm on your side! I'm definitely NOT a projection of Druckermort from the past, communicating in your present which is my future, even though my older self tried to kill your younger self years after I'm writing this, here in the past which you're reading now, later...
Stop it! You've given me triple-reverse jet lag! But how do I know you'll help?
Hey, if you can't trust a demon diary from a faceless stalker, who CAN you trust?
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Tsk! What a pity you've both been suspended from Halfwits for endangering the lives of its secondary characters!
That's okay, Mr. Malformed! I could use a few months off to comb the split ends out of my hair!
While I'm away at prison, like, jus' be sure t' feed all o' my animals. Y' can feed half o' them t' the other half!
We wore my invisible cloak to sneak into the enchanted forest! And now we're being rescued from being devoured by 30 million talking spiders by a sentient flying car! Do you know what this means?
Yes! J.K. Rowling has officially run out of good ideas!
EAT MY DUST!
That paper has to be important! Believe me. I can tell! I've seen every single episode of Blue's Clues!
Of course! The reason somebody's been killing all the roosters around here is because roosters can kill an Asterisk Snake! Asterisks only fear roosters! We've got to fight that snake!
So, shall we bring a rooster into the Chamber with us?
No, that would make far too much sense! Let's go find Pockmark, the most inept phony in the entire school, and bring him instead!
SPARE PART
To save your sister Ninny, we have to get past the killer snake! Down there!
This is the most deadly situation in the history of this bathroom. Or at least since the infamous bratwurst, sauerkraut and beans banquet of 1768!
SECRET ENTRANCE
Ugh! This place is filled with rubble, cobwebs, rat skulls and a huge empty snakeskin!
This is like the Osama bin Laden episode of Cribs!
Ho HO! Now I'll just zap you and have the glory all to myself! Prepare to have your minds totally erased, boys! Whoops... which way does this wand face? Uhhhrrr...mommy?
Yow! That was close! I can't believe one of our own professors tried to betray us!
Pockmark's lucky! He's the only person who won't notice that the "final showdown in the basement maze" ending we're doing now is a straight ripoff from the first book!
ZZZZAAP!

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Ha ha! If you'd ever taken the trouble to switch around the letters in my full name, you would have realized that I was Lord Druckermort all along!
You mean the most dangerous wizard in the world gets his kicks from stupid word games? And by the way, great puzzle! It's real easy to hide secret messages when you use phony, made-up middle names like "Marcurko"!
Don't [redacted] a wiseass! Or else I'll change YOUR middle name to "Doosenuped"! Then the letters in your name will spell out "dropped on your head, loser"!
TOM MARVOLO RIDDLE
You cut off the front tip! And I didn't even know you were Jewish!
Thisssss is Hollywood! Even we sssssnakes get plastic sssssurgery! Now can we ssssspeed this up? I've got an audition for Dr. Doolittle 3 to get to!
I've only got one chance to survive! I must stab this magic diary with a snake tooth, thereby disintegrating Druckermort and bringing Ninny to life! What an incredible plan! Suddenly, the friendly car that saved us from hungry spiders seems like Shakespeare!
Curse you, Harry Plodder! You've beaten me again! I mean, you've beaten my young self for the first time! I mean, the older Harry Plodder has beaten the first Druckermort, who's really Tom Riddler...ah, screw it! See you in #3!
Harry Plodder, you've done it! You beat Druckermort single-handedly! You're a hero!
Wait one stinkin' minute! I bring the book, I bring the sword, I blind the snake, I heal the wound...and that friggin' HARRY is the hero? Lousy creep! PETA is going to hear about this!
I never thought I'd say this, Plodder, but your interference has cost me my elf! On second thought, why would I ever think I'd say that?
Slobby no can believe it! Slobby a slave until master give him article of clothing! When Slobby caught dirty, crusty old sock, Slobby become free! Slobby can maybe use sock for Slobby's sleeping bag!
Don't be that grateful! Don't forget that this school only has single-sex dorms! That's my special late-night "Harry Plodder and the Long, Cold, Lonely Semester" sock!
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Now that the crisis has passed, is there anything you wish to know?
There sure is! Why did you hire a dangerous incompetent like Pockmark? If your bird could find the Chamber of Secretions in two minutes, why couldn't you find it in 50 years? Why should I consider you a mentor and protector when I almost get killed right under your nose in every book? How did you get fired, then just come back anyway? And why is everyone so happy? The #1 bad guy's gotten away. Not just once, but over and over! So what do we do now?
Exactly what President Bush did with Al Qaeda! Ignore all evidence to the contrary and declare total victory!
However, one danger remains! There is a chamber with an even darker secret! A secret that could spell doom for your future! Dare you face it, Harry?
I saw Haggard in the shower once! Nothing scares me anymore! Show me the way!
DANGER
CAUTION
ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK
It's J.K. Rowling! Already a year late and she's still got writer's block! If she doesn't crank out that 5th *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* book — and soon — we're all going to be out of jobs! *Hocus bogus!*
DRUM
DRUM
DRUM
DRUM
HARRY POTT

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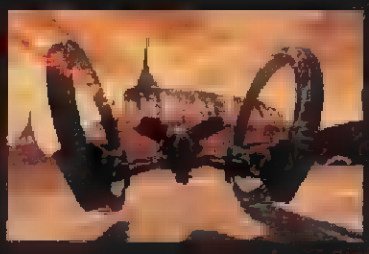
THE CLONE WARS ARE FAR FROM OVER

STAR WARS THE CLONE WARS



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PlayStation 2

NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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TEEN T ESRB

Violence

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Day after day, we hear of a new corporate scandal, along with fresh allegations of fraud and dishonest accounting practices. To save our readers the time and effort of plowing through article after article, MAD now wraps up the entire mess. Simply fill in the numbered blanks from the corresponding numbered lists, and you'll have MAD's...

ALL-INCLUSIVE DO-IT-YOURSELF CORPORATE SCANDAL NEWSPAPER STORY

1

- financial experts
- the Wall Street Journal
- an SEC snitch
- Alan Greenspan's DNA
- Ted Williams' will
- a poll of Amish CPAs
- Allen Iverson's rap-sheet
- Ray Liotta's evil twin
- a Bantu torch song
- some guy named Karl

According to __1__,

__3__ __4__,

the report condemns

who __8__,

Experts warn that only

12

- prevent another Great Depression
- restore public confidence
- cancel *Big Brother 5*
- reunite Tom and Nicole
- slim down Rosie O'Donnell
- halt global warming
- shut up Ted Turner
- bring peace to the Maldives
- restore Topeka to its former glory
- end the side effects of Vioxx

11

- new regulations
- government watchdogs
- impeaching Dubya
- not landing on Park Place
- weekly high colonics
- penile implants
- Rogaine slurpees
- the public flogging of Martha Stewart
- adding eunuchs to the Supreme Court
- replacing the dollar with wampum

10

- the stock market
- the business community
- the Christian Coalition
- Grand Theft Auto III enthusiasts
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- granola snorters
- yak hunters
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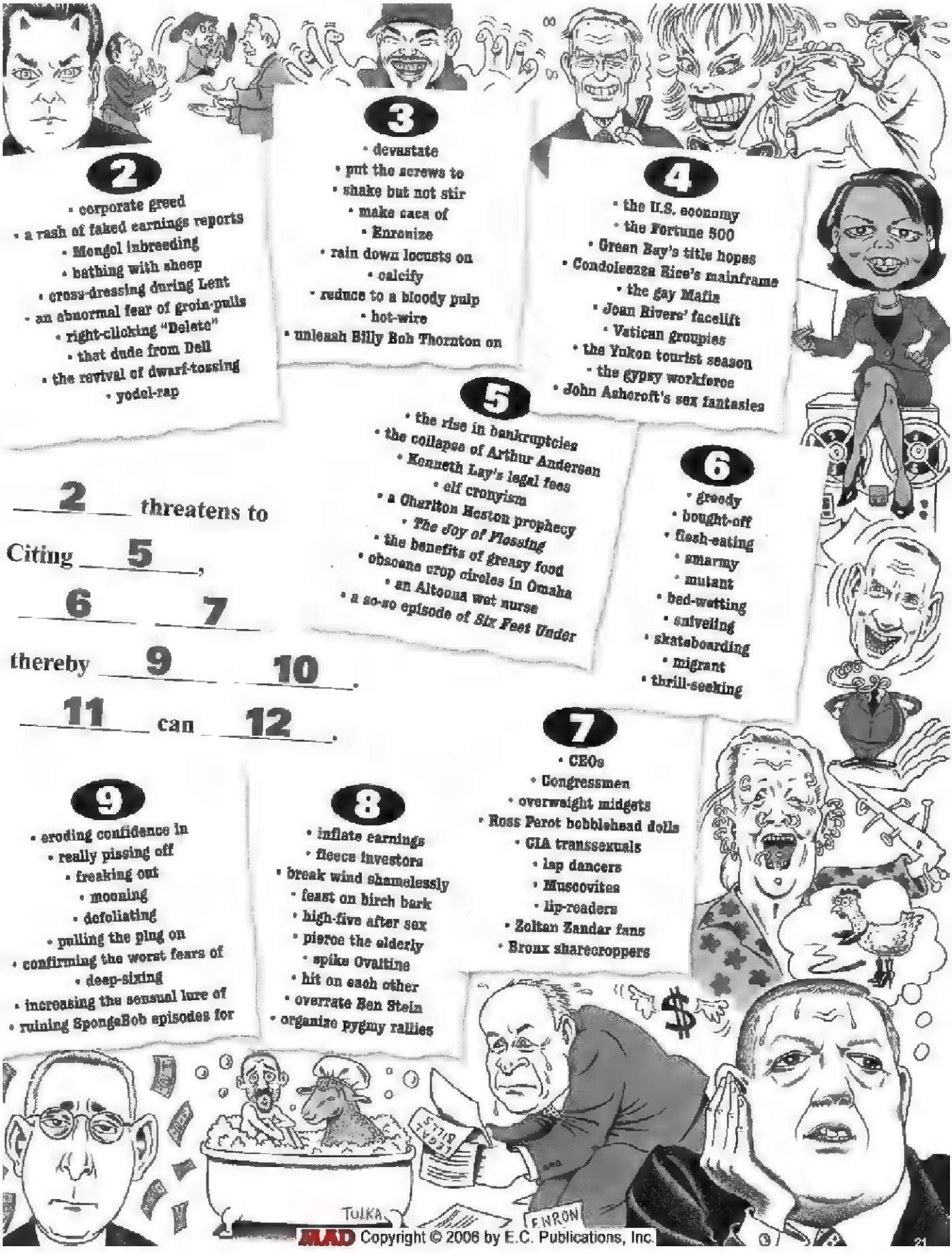

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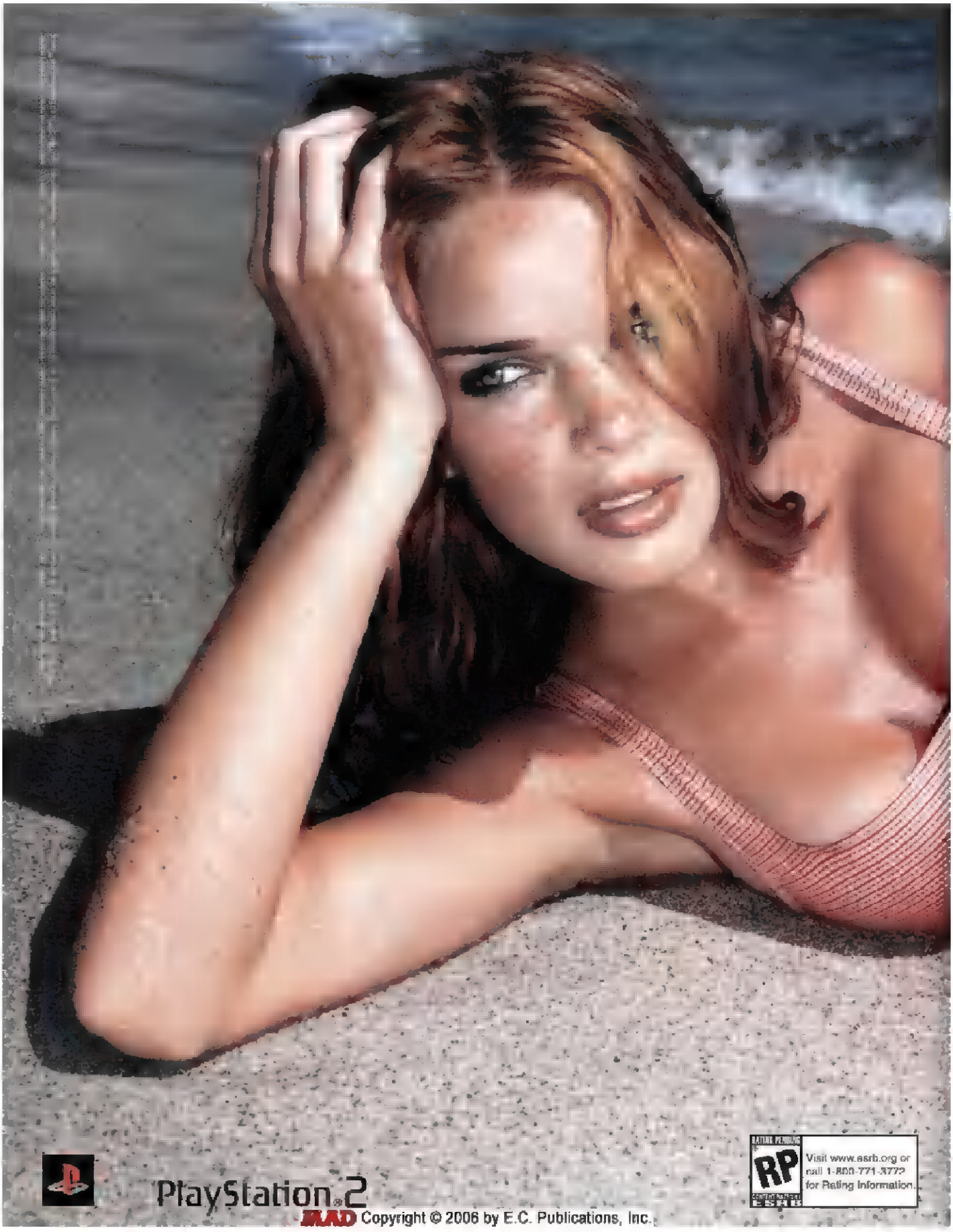

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A PAGE FROM HER CROOK BOOK DEPT.

Anyone who reads *Martha Stewart Living* magazine (and that number dwindles every day) knows that one page each month is dedicated to "Martha's Calendar," a day-by-day listing of Martha's projects, chores, jaunts and reminders. (If you *don't* read the magazine, now you know, too. Macramé breath!) We never had any reason to doubt the calendar wasn't true, but considering Martha's current insider trading problems, we can't believe her days are still filled with just making lavender potpourris and bottling persimmon chutney! We'd like to see a more accurate monthly schedule of her activities, something like...

IF MARTHA'S calendar

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Shred summer cabbage for coleslaw; shred documentation of other "perfectly legal" stock trades the SEC hasn't found out about yet	2 Take Sam Waksal off Christmas card list; Put SEC chairman (whoever it is) ON Christmas card list

NOVEMBER

3 Can peaches and tomatoes; can stockbroker whose assistant sang to feds	4 Plant hardy perennials that won't need maintenance for, like, 7–10 years, just in case	5 Move seedlings from garden to greenhouse; move assets from U.S. to Bermuda	6 8:36 a.m. *Court TV* appearance	7 Harvest favors from politicians who received large re-election donations into making this whole nightmare disappear	8 Dig up Forsythia bushes and someone at Merrill Lynch willing to swear under oath that the ImClone stock sale was made on a previously arranged sell order	9 Knit a tea cozy large enough to hide under
10 Put summer clothing into storage, for, like, 7–10 years, just in case	11 Call friend Anna Wintour — ask her to run story in *Vogue* promoting orange jumpsuits as new "in" fashion look	12 Organize and inventory collection of new alibis	13 8:36 a.m. *Court TV* appearance	14 Add organic waste and recent phone records to compost pile	15 Research which countries do not have extradition treaties with U.S.	16 Book flight to one of those countries
17 Hire acting coach to teach looks of remorse, humility, etc.	18 To escape doldrums, fire random employee for no reason	19 Call Justice Department — offer to cater John Ashcroft's next birthday party FREE	20 8:36 a.m. *Court TV* appearance	21 Install subdued and tasteful track lighting in escape tunnel	22 Paint picket fence green or yellow ■ purple — ANY color that makes it look less like a cold, confining prison cell	23 Experiment with number fonts to see which look nicest stenciled on the front and back of garments
24 Sunday brunch with friends — if there are any left	25 Scour flea markets for tin prison cups — practice drinking out of them	26 Get sized for ankle bracelet monitoring device, just in case	27 8:36 a.m. *Court TV* appearance	28 Thanksgiving (Not being celebrated this year)	29 Spend day kicking self for being such a greedy idiot	30 Climb Mt. Kilimanjaro again — but this time stay there!

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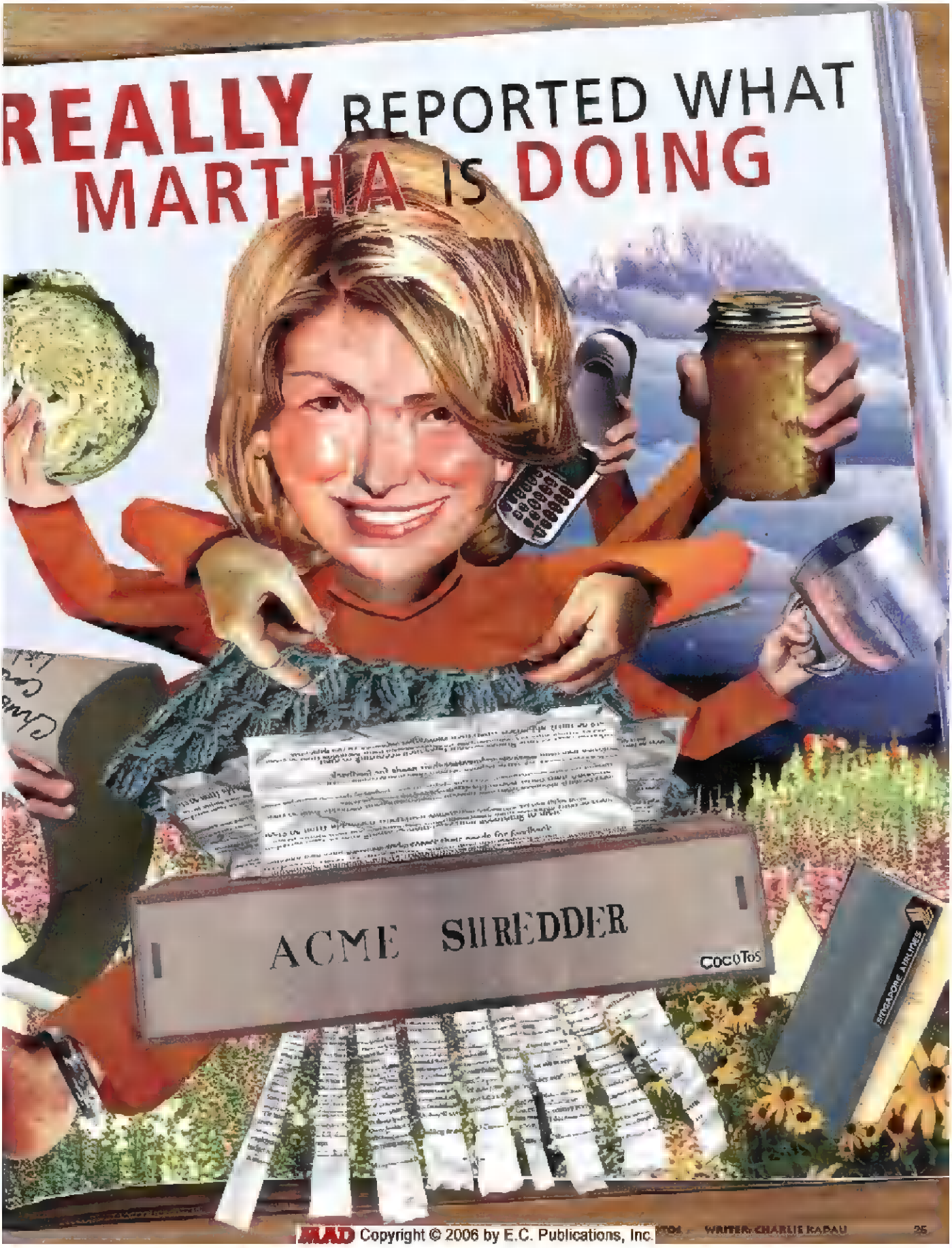

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ANGSTER'S PARADISE DEPT.

Join us as Monroe learns that just being yourself isn't all it's cracked up to be. It's...

MONROE and...

DAD, YOU ALMOST DONE OR WHAT?
WOULD YOU GET OUT OF HERE? YOU'RE SPOILING THE MOOD! TSK!
Well... SweetTooth2000... how about...if... I send you...a... bus ticket...?
I GOTTA CHECK MY EMAIL.
WAIT... DON'T GO! DAMN! SHE LOGGED OFF! NICE GOING, JERKO, YOU MADE ME LOSE ANOTHER ONE!
YOU'VE GOT MAIL!
YES!
WALTER, YOU KNOW A LOT ABOUT COMPUTERS AND STUFF.
MOSTLY COMPUTERS. STUFF ELUDES ME.
WHATEVER. WHY WOULD MY SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER COME UP INVALID?
WHATTAYA MEAN? YOU DIDN'T GIVE SOMEONE YOUR NUMBER, DID YOU?
NO! GOD NO! BUT SAY I DID. WOULD THAT BE BAD?
VERY BAD! WITH A FEW PIECES OF INFORMATION LIKE YOUR NAME AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, SOMEONE COULD TAKE OVER YOUR WHOLE LIFE!
AND CONSIDERING MY LIFE, TELL ME AGAIN WHY THAT WOULD BE BAD?
OKAY. WHO DID YOU GIVE YOUR NUMBER TO?
MAYBE YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN THIS.
WHATTAYA GOT?
IT'S A CREDIT CARD BILL FOR A SPEEDBOAT!
WE BOUGHT A SPEEDBOAT? WAIT, ARE WE RUNNING BOOZE AND TAX-FREE CIGARETTES UP THE COAST AGAIN?
I WISH! NO, IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR SON HERE IS RUNNING UP BILLS ON SOME BOGUS CREDIT CARDS!
SAY, BOY, MAYBE YOU ARE TURNING INTO SOMETHING AFTER ALL!
IT WASN'T ME!
SHOULDA FIGURED
I'VE BEEN THE VICTIM OF AN IDENTITY THEFT!
YOU? WHO IN THE HELL WOULD WANT TO BE YOU?

ARTIST: BILL WRAY WRITER: ANTHONY BARBIERI

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IDENTITY THEFT
NUTS! NOTHING BUT SPAM...LOW INTEREST RATES...BLAH BLAH... INCREASE THE SIZE OF YOUR WHAT?! HELLO... AND CLICK!
YES, YES AND YES!
Would you like to boost your manhood? Enhance your ego? Swell your trousers?
YOU GOT IT, BOSS!
Type in your name and social security number.
CLICK-CLACK
WAIT, I'M VALID! DAMN! THERE GOES MY DREAM OF BEING ABLE TO SHOWER IN PUBLIC!
Sorry, but that number is invalid. Goodbye!
WELL, IF YOU MUST KNOW... TODAY I TRIED TO GIVE IT TO "JUMBOMAN 2000 TROUSER ENHANCER PILLS UNLIMITED," BUT IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK.
UM... OKAY BUT REALLY, MONROE, I SAY YOU'RE PROBABLY JUST FINE THE WAY YOU ARE.
WELL, THANKS, I GUESS. LOOK, LET'S PLEASE GET BACK ON THE SUBJECT.
NOW, WHO ELSE DID YOU TELL YOUR NUMBER?
NOBODY. JUST SOME CHICK IN A CHAT ROOM AND A GUY DOING A SURVEY AT THE MALL. AND I PUT IT ON SOME ENTRY FORMS TO WIN A HYUNDAI.
A HYUNDAI? YOU ARE RETARDED!
WHAT'S ALL THE HULLA-BALOO?
SOMEONE STOLE MY SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.
SOCIAL SECURITY? PSHAA! IT'S ALL THAT CRIPPLED FREAK FDR'S FAULT!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THEY THINK I'M GONNA TURN COMMIE FOR THEIR MEASLY HANDFUL OF BLOOD MONEY?!
IT'S HIS HYPOGLYCEMIA TALKING.
WHAT WAS I JUST SAYING?
YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY.
OH GOOD, DID MY CHECK COME? WHO WANTS TO GO PLAY THE PONIES? IT'S ON ME!!
THIS IS A MILLION MILES FROM HELPING.
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MONROE
COME ON, MONROE. WE'LL FIX THIS UP. THEN WE CAN HIT THE SOUND OF MUSIC SINGALONG MATINEE.
AND WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE SOMEBODY'S BEEN CLAIMING TO BE YOU?
HMMM, LET ME THINK, SIPOWICZ! MAYBE WHEN I GOT MY FIRST BAR TAB FROM THE BAHAMAS?! DO I LOOK TAN? DO I?
NEXT.
HE'S SORRY, MISTER. HE'S BEEN UNDER A LOT OF STRESS AND HE DOESN'T REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT HIS CREDIT RATING IS FOR HIS FUTURE!
HE SHOULDN'T BE CONCERNED. ANYBODY CAN SEE HE'S GOT NO FUTURE!
HELLO? VICTIM HERE!!
ANY ADVICE SIR? Please?
WELL, HE COULD FILL OUT THESE FORMS. BUT I RECOMMEND HE FILE FOR PERSONAL BANKRUPTCY NOW AND JUST GET IT OVER WITH.
I HAD NO IDEA IT WAS SUCH A PAIN IN THE ASS TO GET MY IDENTITY BACK!
GUNS AND
HEY DILLWAD, HOW DO YOU LIKE MY NEW S.U.V.?
UM... IT'S COOL, DYLAN, WHY ARE YOU ASKING ME?
'CAUSE YOU BOUGHT IT, DORK! THANKS FOR THE BOGUS VISA!
GREAT. YOU STOLE MY IDENTITY, TOO?
WHAT THE HELL, EVERYBODY IS DOING IT. YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER IS ALL OVER THE NET!!
VROOM!
NO-NO-NO NO-NO...
REMEMBER, MONROE .. I'M STILL HERE FOR YOU!
NOOO
BILL GRAY

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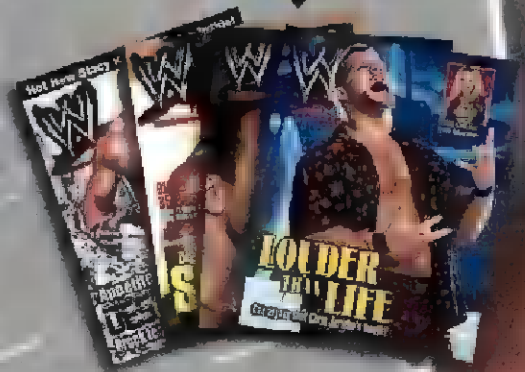

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VOLUME 38 ISSUE 43 AMERICA'S PHONIEST NEWS SOURCE

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IN THE NEWS

Funny Hairdo, Muppet Reportedly Turns Otherwise Uninteresting Bush Photo "Wacky"

Above: President Bush, seen here sporting a comically oversized woman's hairdo while standing next to popular children's character Grover, was in fact standing alone and had a traditionally short, conservative men's hairstyle at the time the actual photo was taken.

NEW YORK, NY — The additions of a funny hairdo and a Muppet have turned what many referred to as an uninteresting photo of President Bush into a hilariously "wacky" image. The original photograph, released last Monday, was downloaded from the official White House website. With the use of a standard computer graphics program, a bouffant hairdo was digitally added to his head. Pasted into the photo is an image of popular Muppet character Grover, who appears to be standing next to Bush. "We made the photo so wacky that we almost didn't need to write our usual overly-long and one-note gag news story to accompany it," laughed Bunion editor Tom Koehler.

Unlikely Words, Phrases

TOP STORY

Area Man Finds Headline Amusing But That's About It

Above: Legal assistant Ray Jeffries often finds the headlines amusing, but the bodies of the articles lacking in substance. "The captions they run below the photos aren't much better," he says.

BETHESDA, MD — Ray Jeffries thought the headline to this story was kind of funny, but "that was about it." Jeffries, a legal assistant at a local law firm, admits to having become bored by what he describes as an "entirely predictable format." "The headline was kind of amusing, I guess. But then the article was just a rehash of the headline. What's the point?"

Jeffries noted that it's not the first time he's had this reaction and that he previously chuckled at headlines involving the aging pope, a kindergarten class's bean sprout project and the Kool-Aid Man. "But basically it's all the same," he explains. "They shoot their wad with the headline and it's a lot of nothing after that." The 36-year-old considers himself a "fairly intelligent" person with a "reasonably good" sense of humor. "It's not that I don't get it. I can grasp subtlety. And I understand satire. But what more is there to say after you've led with, say, 'Ticketed Motorist Vows To Exact Revenge On Meter Maid With Caustic Barb In Memo Line Of Check'? That's the whole gag. Anything more is mere repetition."

OPINION

Point-Counterpoint: Point-Counterpoint

We've Kind Of Run This Feature Into

OTHER NEWS

Some Guy In Mall Signs A Release To Pose For Picture To Run With Possibly Unflattering Mock News Story

Thirty Column Inches Of Text Used To Describe Fictional Middle-Class Woman In Dull Job Facing Uninteresting Dilemma, Maybe About Minor Nuisance In Break Room At Work Or Something

Ending Crazy Headline With Some Variation Of "Study Shows" Ensures Hilarity, Study Shows

Report: Starting Bizarre Headline With "Report" Apparently Even More Hilarious Than Ending With "Study Shows"

Retarded, Crippled People Head List Of Easy Targets For Zany Mock Articles For Third Consecutive Year

NEWS IN BRIEF

Inconsequential Everyday Occurrence Covered With Gravity,

In Headline and Body of Story Make Some Articles Sorta Funny, Experts Say

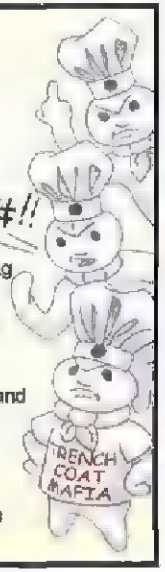
ST. LOUIS, MO — A study issued by the Conference of American Journalism says that the simple act of using "a few well-chosen words can maybe turn a dry news story with, like, little humor potential, into one that's sorta funny. "It's a delicate balance," says panel spokesman Todd Aberline. "You've got to use a certain amount of standard news jargon but then every few lines, throw in a ringer." Experts note that you've totally got to watch the placement of the quotation marks as well, or you're screwed. "You definitely don't want to put your quotes around the incongruent word or phrase," Aberline explains. "That makes it look like you're quoting someone and that you, as the reporter, know the word wouldn't normally appear in that context in a standard newspaper article otherwise." According to the study, without the quotation marks, a really lame story can end up being pretty frickin' funny, and also way cool.

CRAPshot

A look at yet another rip-off of Letterman's Top Ten

The Most Overused Themes On Our Website

1. Subject of article vaguely referred to as "Some Guy" in the headline
2. Offensive, sacreligious news story featuring Christ as a normal person who just happens to live among us
3. Headline peppered with gratuitous curse words as the entire set-up and execution of a gag
4. News item about a well-known advertising character saying and doing things its corporate owners would not approve of
5. Typical advice feature attributed to an unlikely columnist who disregards the questions entirely and instead replies to each letter by expounding on his, her, or its area of expertise, literary style, or obsession
6. Thinly-veiled "humorous" take on a horrific tragedy done sooner after the actual event than good taste would dictate



The Ground, If You Ask Me

by Mark Foster

You know, these debates were funny at first. But they've become very predictable. And here's why: Generally, the first viewpoint puts forth a reasonable, logical argument in favor or in support of something, anything, whatever. Fine. All straight lines. Very dry. That's the set-up. Then comes the opposing side and — zing! — it's completely nuts. While the first part is written by a person, the second part is written, we're supposed to believe, by a squirrel, or an appliance, or Jesus, or some crap. Okay, okay, I know that's not how it always is, but we've used this formula enough times that frankly, even I'm a little sick of it. Sure, it was novel four years ago, but how 'bout we try something new, huh? Or just dump this format altogether.

Oh, Come On! I'm An Egg Separator, For God's Sake! That Right There Is Funny!

by An Egg Separator

Look, I'm an inanimate object and I'm delivering the opposing viewpoint to your argument! Don't you get it? It's frickin' hilarious! I can't really talk or think, nor do I have the physical ability to puts words on the page or computer screen. But that doesn't change the fact that here I am, arguing against your position and telling you that, yes, these debates are incredibly funny! Why? Because I'm a kitchen utensil, and not only do I have an opinion, but apparently it's such a strong opinion that I feel compelled to respond to you by totally flying off the handle! That's hilarious! A plastic doo-dad from your junk drawer actually getting upset! Instead of pitting your lame-ass argument against the rants of another person, the rebuttal is being written by me, (once again) an EGG SEPARATOR. Too damn funny!

EDITORIAL

Why Running An Editorial Attributed To Someone You Wouldn't Expect To Be Writing An Editorial On A Trivial Subject That Normally Doesn't Warrant An Editorial Is So Damn Funny Week After Week by Nelson Mandela

ARTIST: SCOTT BRICHER WRITER: SCOTT MAIKO
PHOTOS: IRVING SCHILD & AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Detachment

BOULDER, CO — An inconsequential everyday occurrence was covered today with the gravity and detachment normally associated with a serious, substantial news item.

Jim Grout, a one-hour photo service employee, got a particularly bad static electricity shock when touching his bedroom doorknob after shuffling back from the bathroom at approximately 2:37 this morning. "Son-of-a-bee, it really woke me up," Grout, 51, told reporters. "I was half-asleep, then zap! Talk about a rude awakening."

Despite the noise of the shock seeming "very loud" to Grout, his wife, Kay, 49, slept undisturbed through the ordeal. "I had no idea anything happened until he mentioned it at breakfast," she explained as though the incident were indeed newsworthy. Experts describe this phenomenon as a form of "irony." "A 'nothing' occurrence will be written about with all the unbiased objectivity and seriousness of a major event," notes Dr. David Jeschke, a legitimate-sounding person who in fact doesn't exist, "while important news will be covered as a human interest piece or incredibly conversationally." While irony can be very effective, Jeschke notes, its overuse in some formats can become "terribly repetitious and one-note." He points to the popular online website...

Full Text>>

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ONE FINE DAY IN THE HOSPITAL

*@#$%&!
MAN, I DON'T THINK YOUR PRISONER IS AS BANGED UP AS YOU COPS THINK HE IS...IN FACT, I THINK HE'S PLANNING TO ESCAPE THE HOSPITAL!
HMMM...
STRIP search!
BODY CAVITY OF THE MONTH
THERE HE GOES! MAN, WHAT'D I TELL YOU?!
HM...
HAR HAR! SO LONG, SUCKERS!
WHAT'S YOUR STORY, MAN? HE'S GETTIN' AWAY!
RELAX... I SPOKE WITH THE DOCTOR...
...LAST NIGHT, HE INSERTED A CATHETER!
TWANG!

ARTIST: HILARY BARTA WRITER: MICHAEL GALLAGHER COLOR: WILDSTORM

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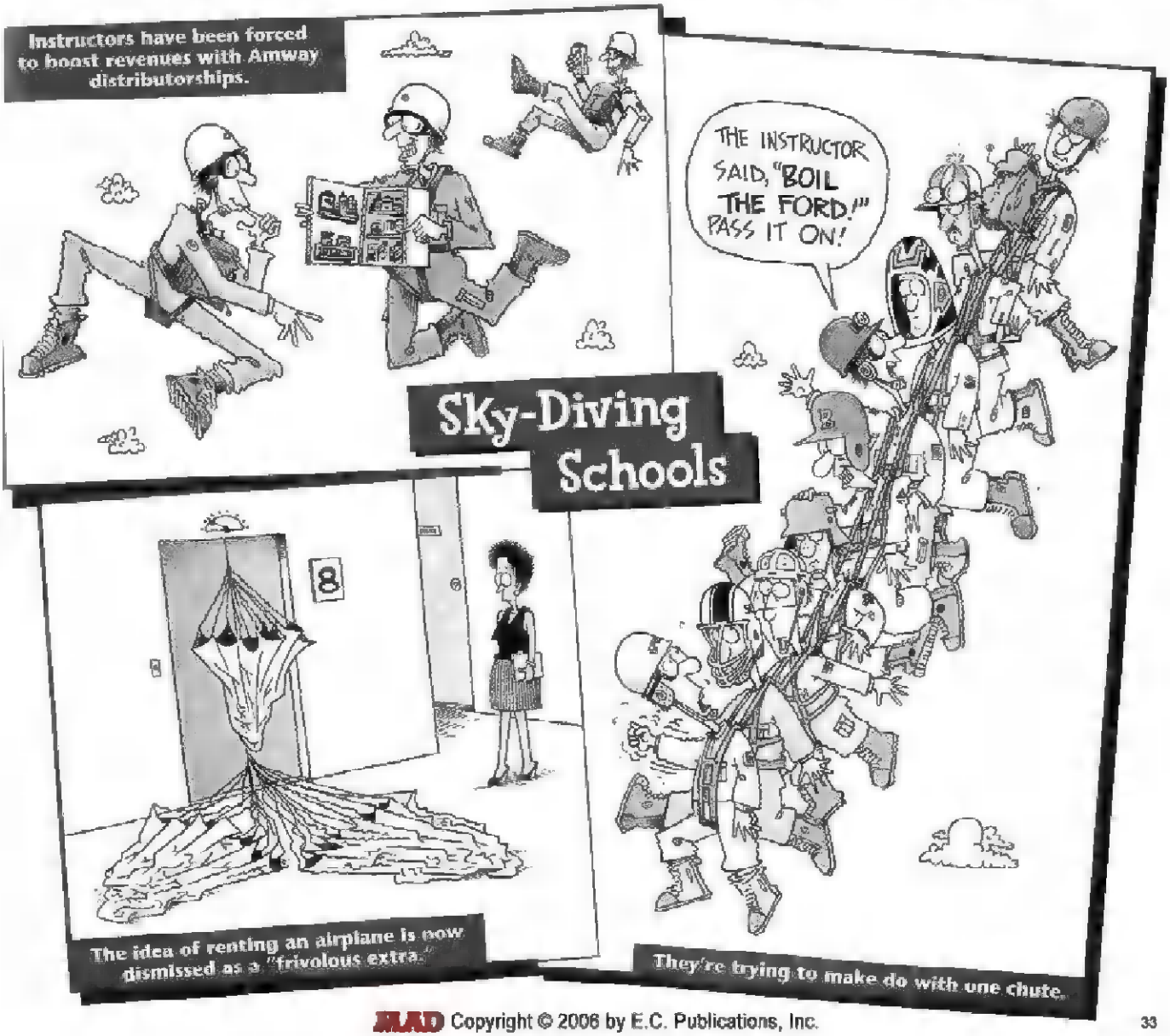
RED INC. DEPT.

In economic terms, a recession is defined as two consecutive quarters of negative growth. For corporate America, this means belt tightening, personnel downsizing and salary freezing. But what, you may ask, is the toll on the small businessman? How is the average Mom and Pop operation riding the tide of this difficult business cycle? How the hell should we know? Who died and made us Lou Dobbs? It was all we could do to figure out...

HOW THE ECONOMIC RECESSION IS AFFECTING CERTAIN FRINGE BUSINESSES


Instructors have been forced to boost revenues with Amway distributorships.
THE INSTRUCTOR SAID, "BOIL THE FORD!" PASS IT ON!
Sky-Diving Schools
The idea of renting an airplane is now dismissed as a "frivolous extra."
They're trying to make do with one chute.

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HOW THE ECONOMIC RECESSION IS AFFECTING CERTAIN FRINGE BUSINESSES

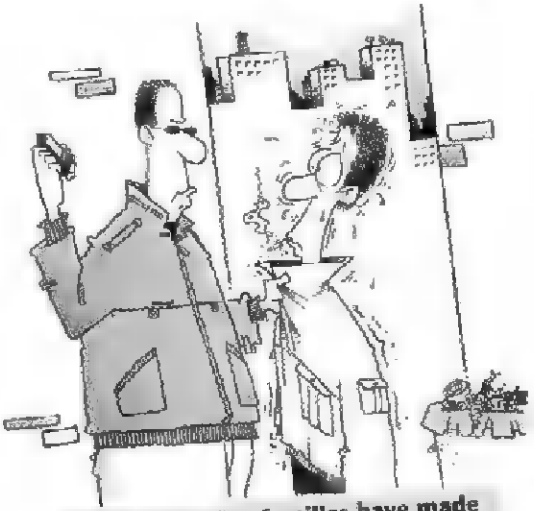
Professional Drag Queens

They've begun lobbying Congress for federal aid.
WHERE IS MY STIMULUS PACKAGE?
ALL OUR EGGS ARE IN ONE BASKET!
WALK A MILE IN OUR PUMPS!

Performers have begun to stuff their bras with cheap, highly combustible Third World material.
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE CLUB WATZIT PROUDLY PRESENTS BRENT E. SPEARS!
Major razor-related cutbacks have been instituted.

The Mob

GRAVEL IS A GOOD THING. OR EVEN SAND.. BOTH HOLD UP WELL UPON EXPOSURE TO WATER.
Hit men are looking for innovative ways to stretch the concrete.



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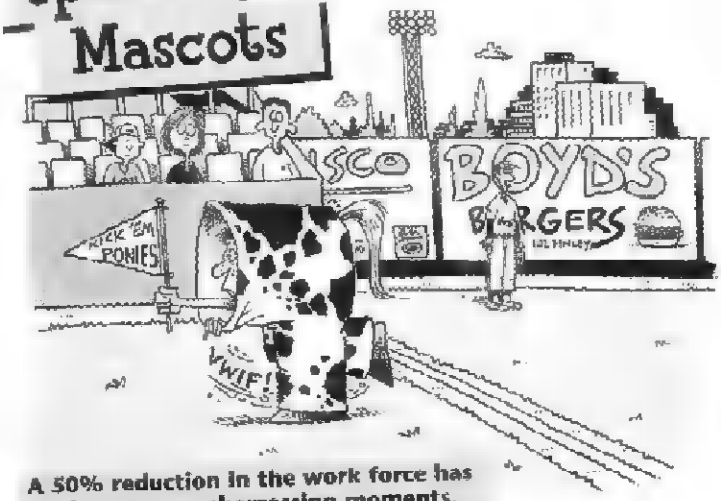
Sports Mascots



A 50% reduction in the work force has led to some embarrassing moments.

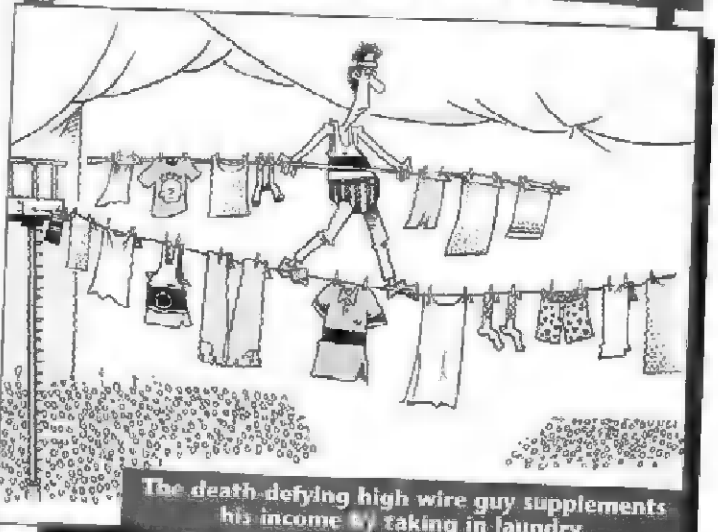
No longer able to afford the health insurance necessary to perform physical comedy, between-inning Shakespeare soliloquies have become common.

Bit by bit, costumes are being sold on eBay.

Circus Folk

Passenger numbers have been drastically cut in an effort to improve clown car gas mileage.

Impoverished clowns have been reduced to buying no-frills brand seltzer, which is frequently flat.



The death-defying high wire guy supplements his income by taking in laundry.

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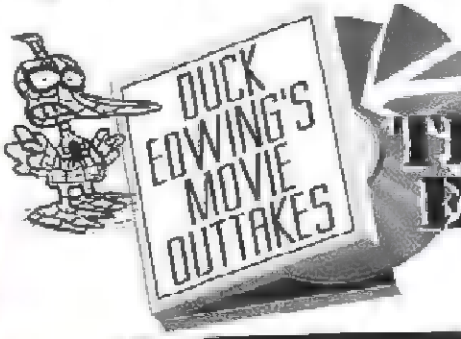

SCENES SO BAD THEY DIDN'T EVEN MAKE THE DVD

THIS MONTH: SPIDER-MAN

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ARTIST AND WRITER: DUCK EDWING

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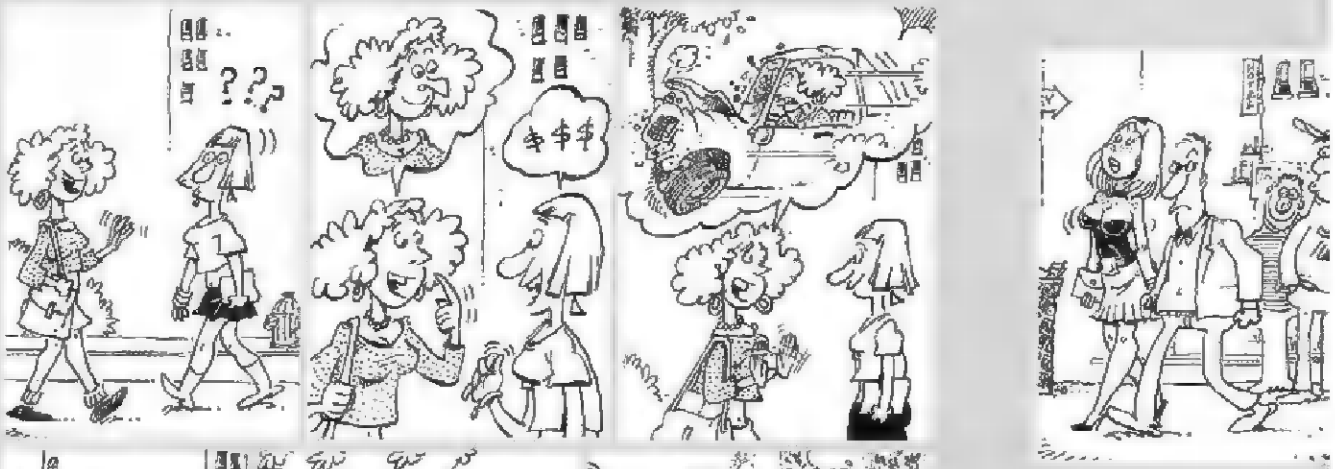

ARTIST & WRITER: SERGIO ARAGONES

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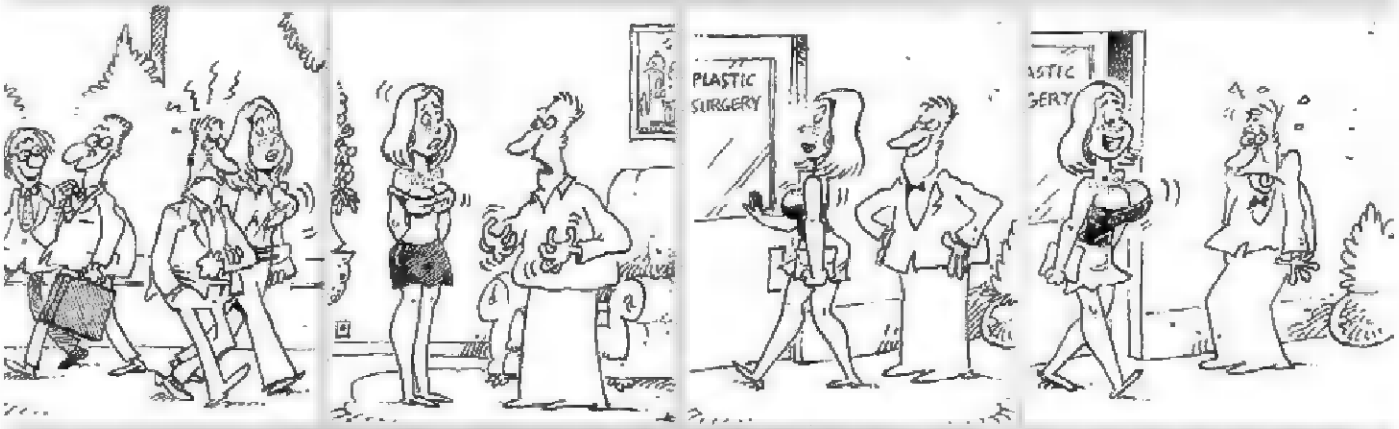
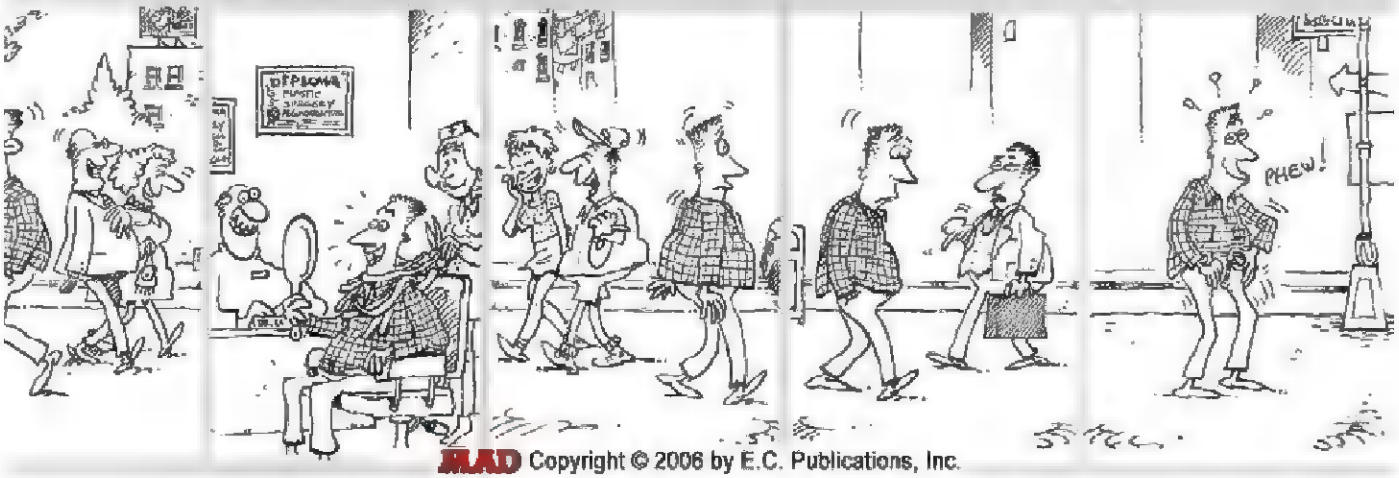
AT PLASTIC SURGERY





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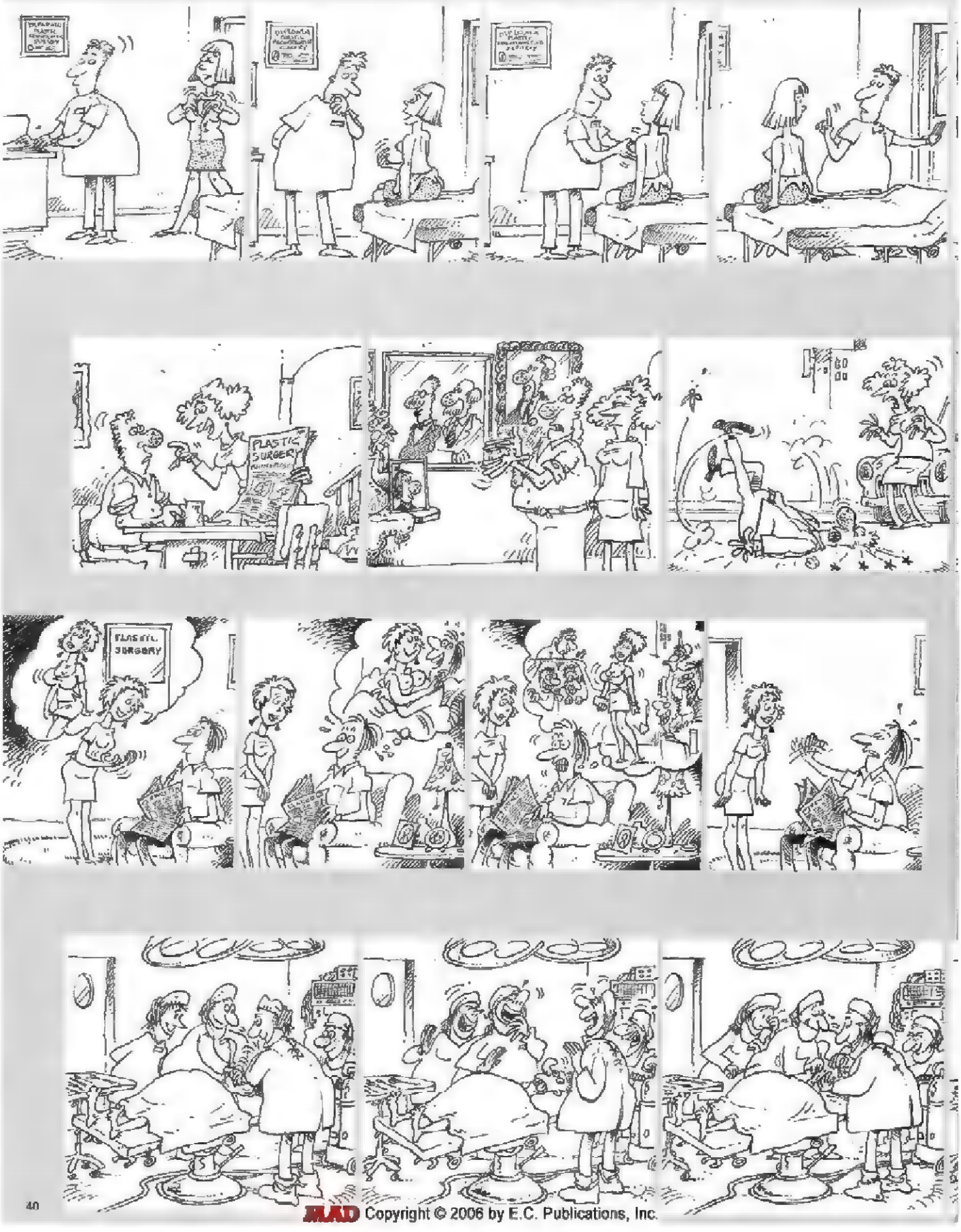

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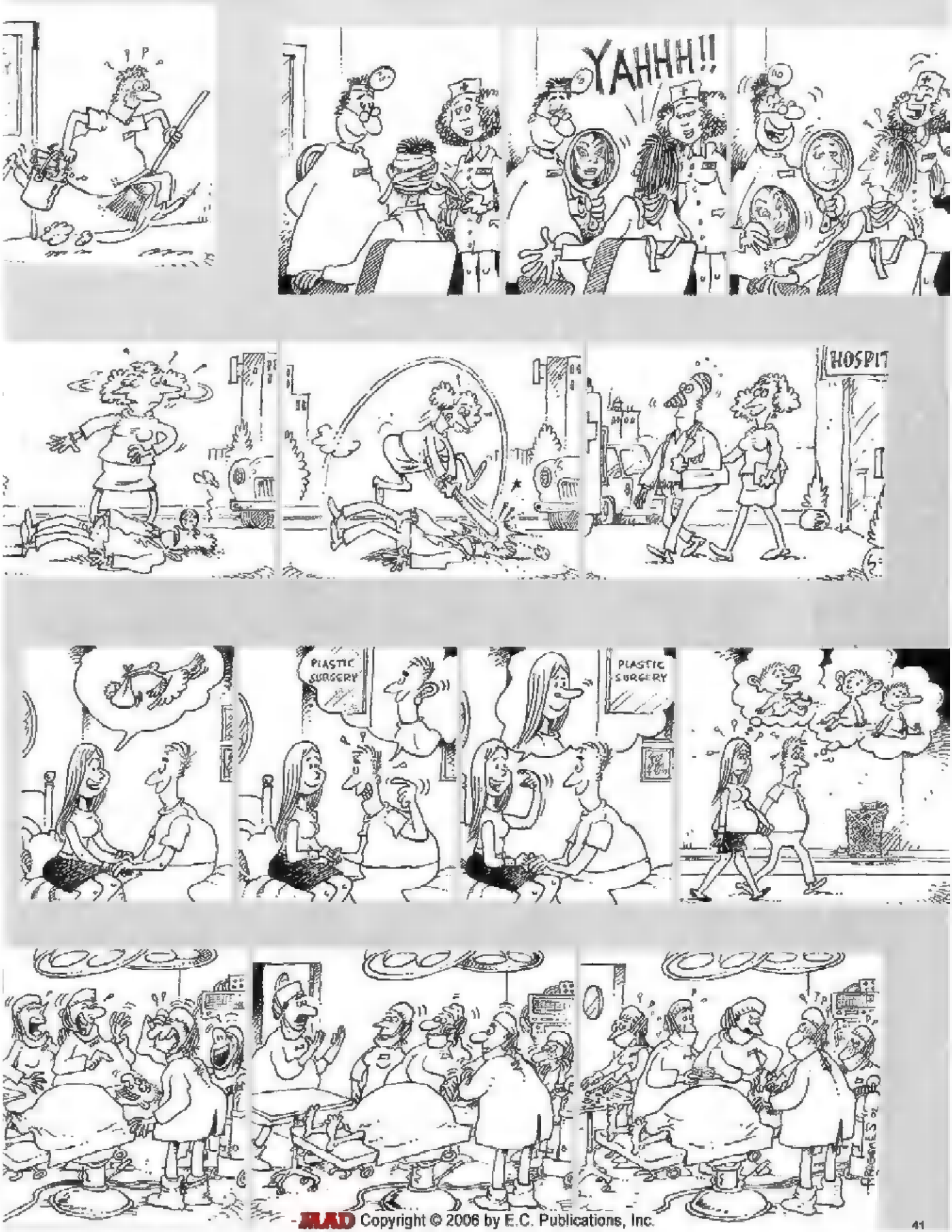

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CROP CIRCLE JERKS DEPT.

It's easy to make a wildly entertaining summer blockbuster! Take a thrilling script, add a captivating leading man, throw in some creepy crop circles and— bammo! — you've got a hit! But, what if the story is the umpteenth knock-off of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*? And what if your star looks like he just woke from a 14-month nap? And what if the crop circles were lame after the 100th preview? Then you've got problems — and the studio's got nothing but a 2-hour dud filled with their painfully failed...

desi

I keep waking up in the middle of the night with a terrible feeling something is wrong. It's almost as if I have a *Sixth Sense* that something bad is happening in my cornfields! I've been so edgy since my wife died. I blame God for taking her, but I suppose the guy in the truck who mowed her down didn't exactly help! When she passed on, I decided there is no God! That's when I left my position as Minister at Saint Dubious!
When my brother lost his wife, he went into a deep depression, so I moved up here to be with him. Since I got here, a big problem's developed. His kids seem to like me more than him! I guess it's because I pay more attention to them, and that I care enough about them to learn their first names! I'm a touch depressed, too. I've been unable to find employment in my specialized field of "failed baseball players"! I was a star slugger, then one day my baseball career was suddenly over. I guess a 6-foot, 24-year-old weighing 200 pounds can fool Little League officials for only so long! Damn!
We woke up this morning and found these huge designs in our cornfield. I told my dad I thought God did it. My dad said God probably did do it, because God has plenty of time on his hands to screw around, now that he no longer chooses to answer people's prayers!
I HATE CORN
MAX KORN FIELD
When the voices told me *"build it and they will come,"* I thought they meant fans, not aliens!
It's true! When you're near death, your life flashes before your eyes. I see that lonely farmhouse my husband made me move into, a million miles from civilization. I see me watering a hundred acres of corn with a bucket. Wow, even my flashback seems dreary! Maybe I should *thank* the guy who drove the truck that hit me and got me out of this rural hellhole!
Of all the bad luck! I ran down the minister's wife! Why did that have to happen? God is going to take vengeance on me! Why couldn't I have been lucky and run over the wife of an atheist!

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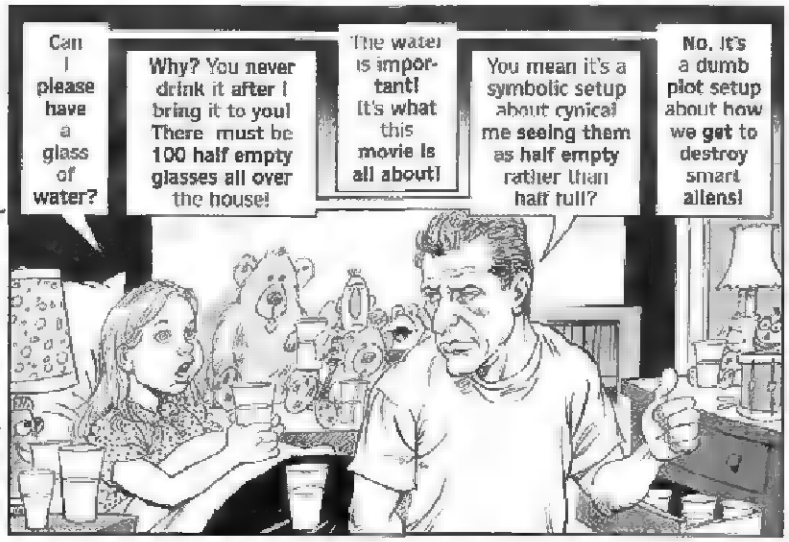
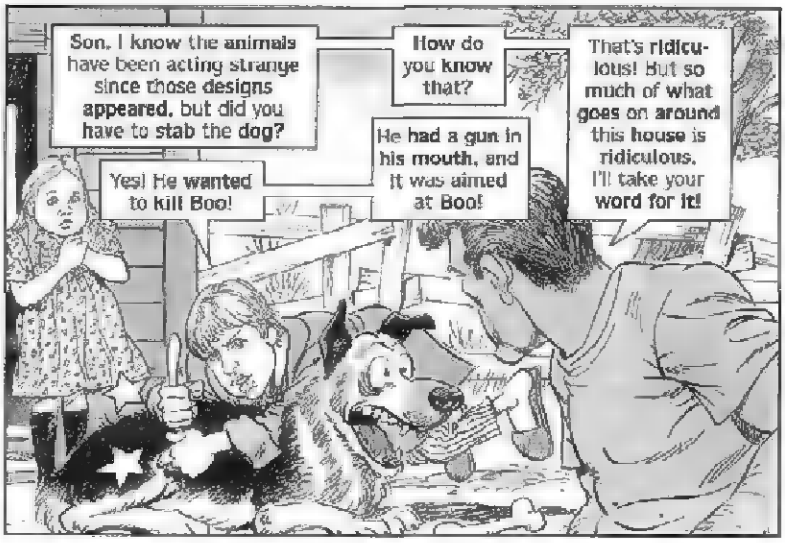
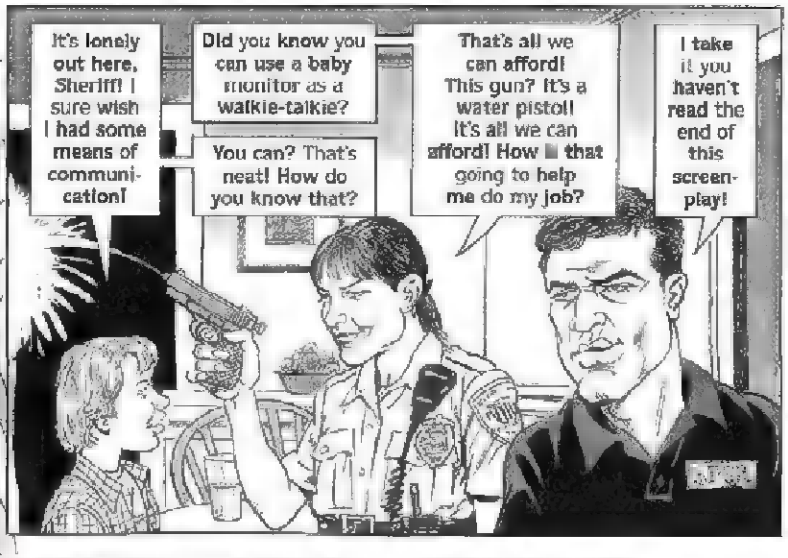
n s

It's true! My daddy is quite mad at God. I know because of the prayer he taught me to say when I go to bed: "Now I lay me down to sleep, not that you give a flying @#$% about it!" I miss my mommy, but I still talk to her. She doesn't answer me, because she's dead. I talk to my daddy, too. He never answers me, either. I'd like to know what his excuse is!
THE CORN AIN'T GREEN
DRIVE SLOW
PED X-ING
Looking at these strange crop circles in the cornfields raises quite a few weird questions about this farm and the family that owns it! Like, how can they grow acres and acres of corn when they don't even own a tractor? Think about it! Have you seen one? I haven't even seen a rake or a hoe! Hell, no one has even seen them eat an ear of corn! It's weird, I tell you! Speaking of corn, let's get on with our story...


Can I please have a glass of water?
Why? You never drink it after I bring it to you! There must be 100 half empty glasses all over the house!
The water is important! It's what this movie is all about!
You mean it's a symbolic setup about cynical me seeing them as half empty rather than half full?
No. It's a dumb plot setup about how we get to destroy smart aliens!


Son, I know the animals have been acting strange since those designs appeared, but did you have to stab the dog?
How do you know that?
That's ridiculous! But so much of what goes on around this house is ridiculous. I'll take your word for it!
He had a gun in his mouth, and it was aimed at Boo!
Yes! He wanted to kill Boo!


It's lonely out here, Sheriff! I sure wish I had some means of communication!
Did you know you can use a baby monitor as a walkie-talkie?
You can? That's neat! How do you know that?
That's all we can afford! This gun? It's a water pistol! It's all we can afford! How is that going to help me do my job?
I take it you haven't read the end of this screenplay!

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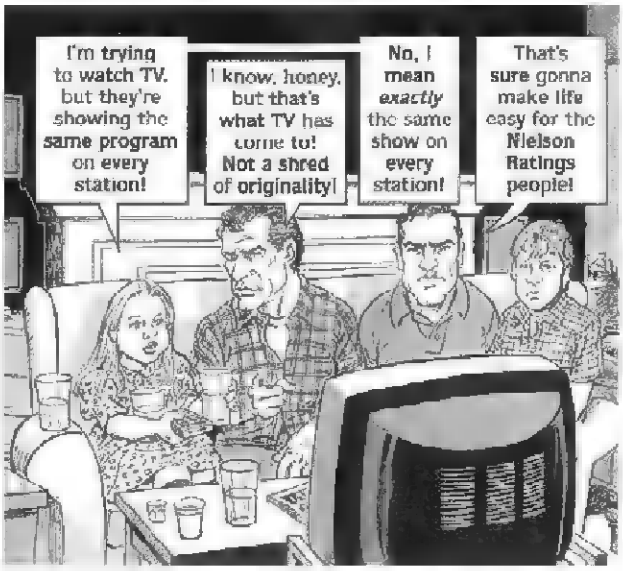
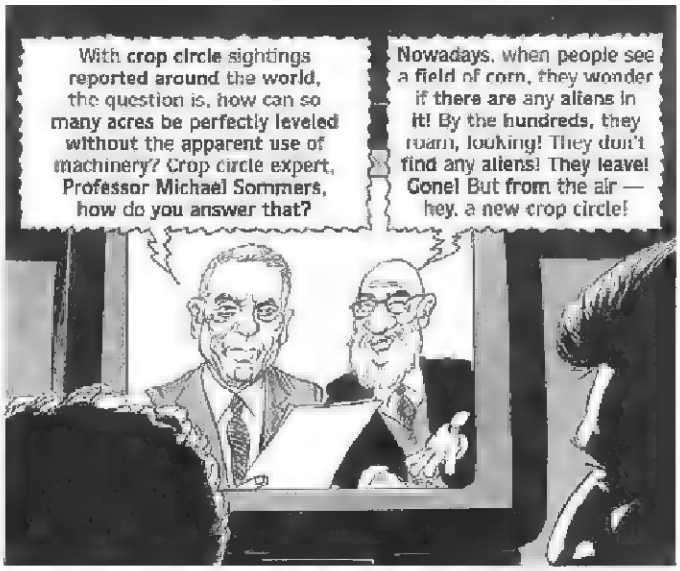
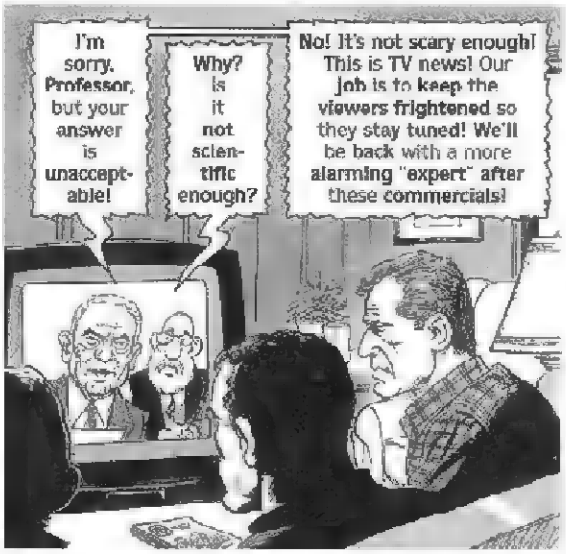
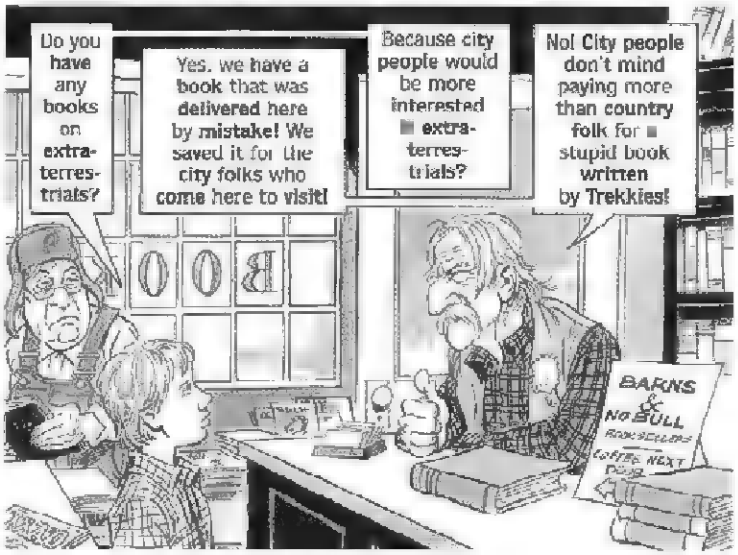
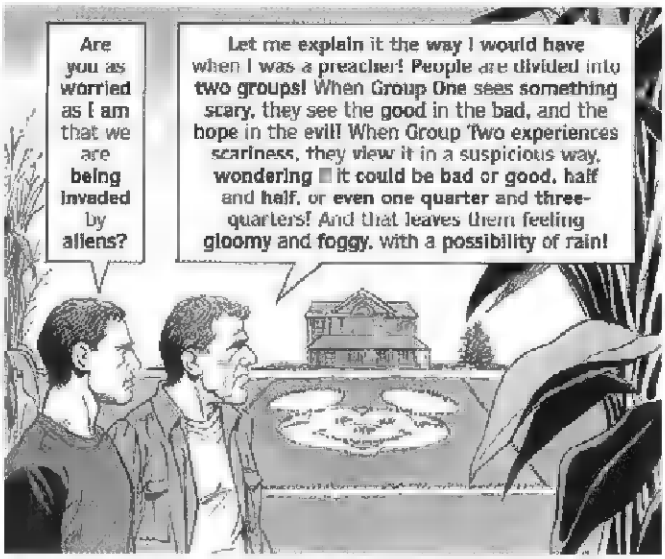
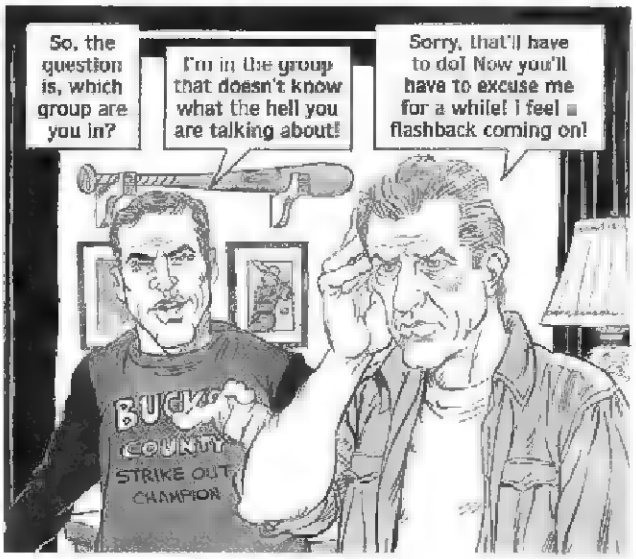

I'm trying to watch TV, but they're showing the same program on every station!
I know, honey, but that's what TV has come to! Not a shred of originality!
No, I mean *exactly* the same show on every station!
That's sure gonna make life easy for the Nielson Ratings people!


With crop circle sightings reported around the world, the question is, how can so many acres be perfectly leveled without the apparent use of machinery? Crop circle expert, Professor Michael Sommers, how do you answer that?
Nowadays, when people see a field of corn, they wonder if there are any aliens in it! By the hundreds, they roam, looking! They don't find any aliens! They leave! Gone! But from the air — hey, a new crop circle!


I'm sorry, Professor, but your answer is unacceptable!
Why? Is it not scientific enough?
No! It's not scary enough! This is TV news! Our job is to keep the viewers frightened so they stay tuned! We'll be back with a more alarming "expert" after these commercials!


Do you have any books on extra-terrestriats?
Yes, we have a book that was delivered here by mistake! We saved it for the city folks who come here to visit!
Because city people would be more interested ■ extra-terrestriats?
No! City people don't mind paying more than country folk for ■ stupid book written by Trekkies!
BOOKS
BARNS & NOBULL
COFFEE NEXT DOOR


Are you as worried as I am that we are being invaded by aliens?
Let me explain it the way I would have when I was a preacher! People are divided into two groups! When Group One sees something scary, they see the good in the bad, and the hope in the evil! When Group Two experiences scariness, they view it in a suspicious way, wondering ■ it could be bad or good, half and half, or even one quarter and three-quarters! And that leaves them feeling gloomy and foggy, with a possibility of rain!


So, the question is, which group are you in?
I'm in the group that doesn't know what the hell you are talking about!
Sorry, that'll have to do! Now you'll have to excuse me for a while! I feel ■ flashback coming on!
BUCKS COUNTY STRIKE OUT CHAMPION

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Your wife has been in an accident! A very, very bad accident!
Where is she?
She's over there, and over there! The rest of her is over there!
Did you call a doctor?
No, we called a sanitation worker! With the shape she's in, a broom would be more useful!
I'm back! When my wife died, she mentioned your name and said something about swinging!
No, I swear it never happened! One night we had a few drinks and maybe a little...
She said she remembered you loved swinging that bat when you played minor league baseball!
Oh, that kind of swinging! I knew that's what you meant! Honest!
This book tells everything about the aliens! They may have come to Earth to share their knowledge with us and, in return, observe and learn from us!
Let's pray that they land near Anna Nicole Smith's house! Observing her, they'll think the planet is devoid of knowledge, made up of silicone, and leave!
Maybe they'll abduct her!
You're asking for too much! Their spacecraft can only hold so much weight!
Father, you can't blame me for hitting your wife with my truck! I mean, I wasn't even awake when it happened!
I know! You were asleep at the wheel while driving, you swine!
You do understand! Now I can go in peace to the lake region! Since the aliens are never seen near water, that's got to mean it's something the director — who happens to be me — will use as a plot device!
MAD TO THE MAX
DR DOOLOT VETERINARIAN
Make yourself at home! There's beer in the refrigerator, and if you can get past the alien I locked in the pantry, there's salsa, chips and cases of canned goods!
Some superior intelligence these aliens have! They can build spaceships that travel through galaxies but couldn't conceive of a simple crowbar to pry off a flimsy pantry door or a couple of nailed boards!
More lights have been spotted! They are now in over 400 cities around the world!
I don't believe it! That there could be so many spaceships ready to attack?
No, that they could be around so many cities across the planet and it's not raining in even one of them to scare those water-vulnerable freaks back to where they came from!

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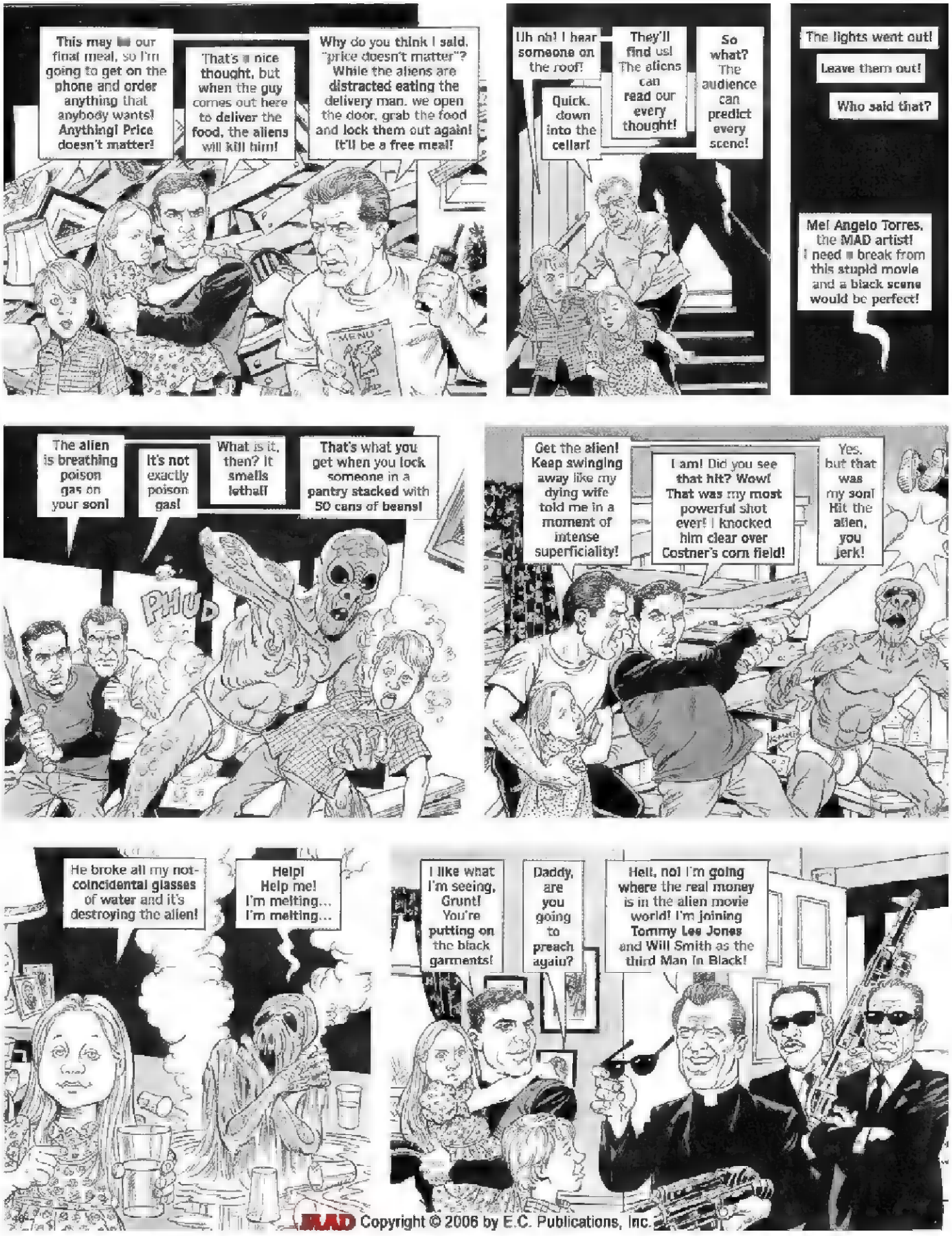
This may be our final meal, so I'm going to get on the phone and order anything that anybody wants! Anything! Price doesn't matter!
That's a nice thought, but when the guy comes out here to deliver the food, the aliens will kill him!
Why do you think I said, "price doesn't matter"? While the aliens are distracted eating the delivery man, we open the door, grab the food and lock them out again! It'll be a free meal!
MENU
Uh oh! I hear someone on the roof!
They'll find us! The aliens can read our every thought!
So what? The audience can predict every scene!
Quick, down into the cellar!
The lights went out!
Leave them out!
Who said that?
Me! Angelo Torres, the MAD artist! I need a break from this stupid movie and a black scene would be perfect!
The alien is breathing poison gas on your son!
It's not exactly poison gas!
What is it, then? It smells lethal!
That's what you get when you lock someone in a pantry stacked with 50 cans of beans!
PHUD
Get the alien! Keep swinging away like my dying wife told me in a moment of intense superficiality!
I am! Did you see that hit? Wow! That was my most powerful shot ever! I knocked him clear over Costner's corn field!
Yes, but that was my son! Hit the alien, you jerk!
He broke all my not-coincidental glasses of water and it's destroying the alien!
Help! Help me! I'm melting... I'm melting...
I like what I'm seeing, Grunt! You're putting on the black garments!
Daddy, are you going to preach again?
Hell, no! I'm going where the real money is in the alien movie world! I'm joining Tommy Lee Jones and Will Smith as the third Man In Black!

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THE FIRST

THE BEST

THE FEW

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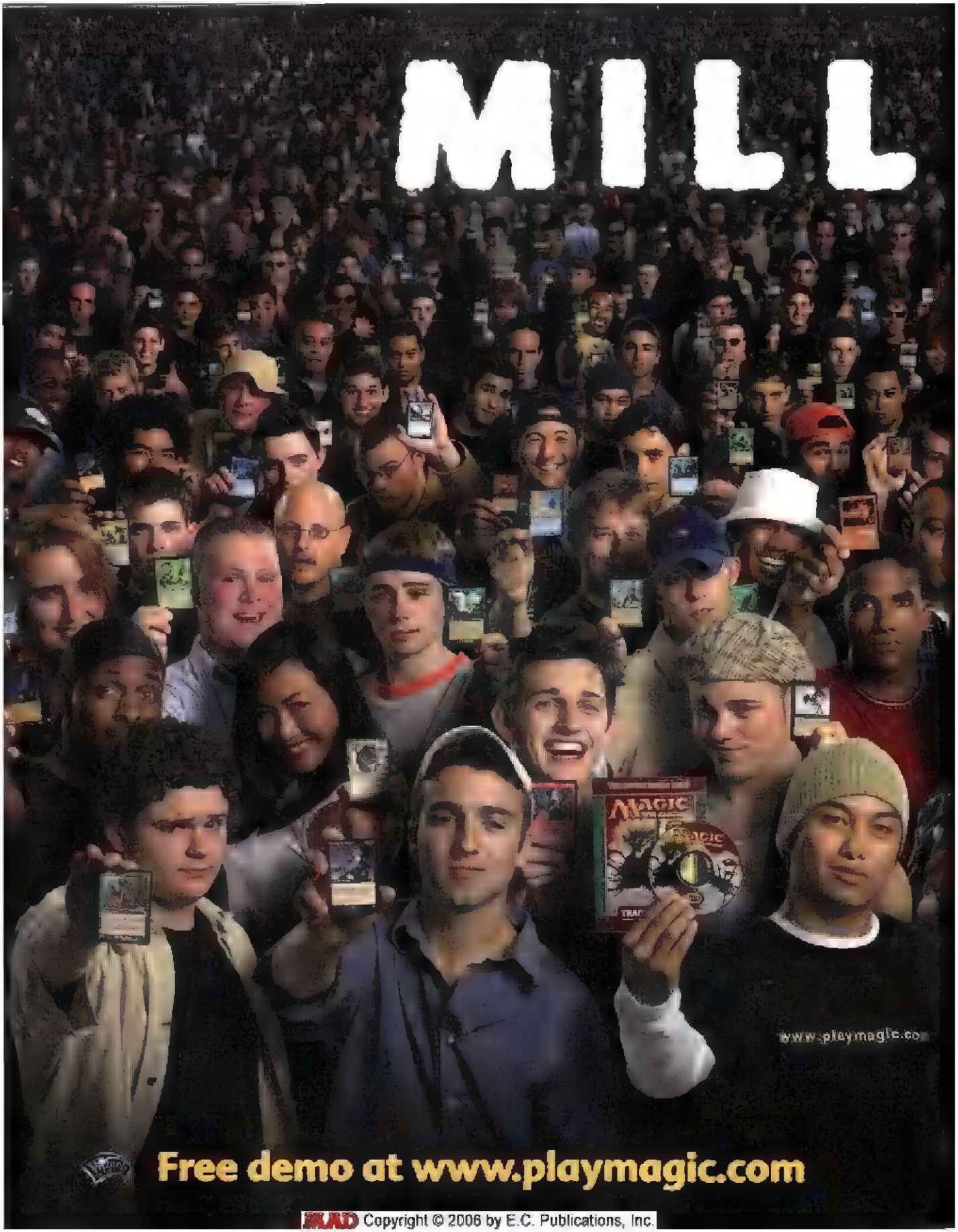

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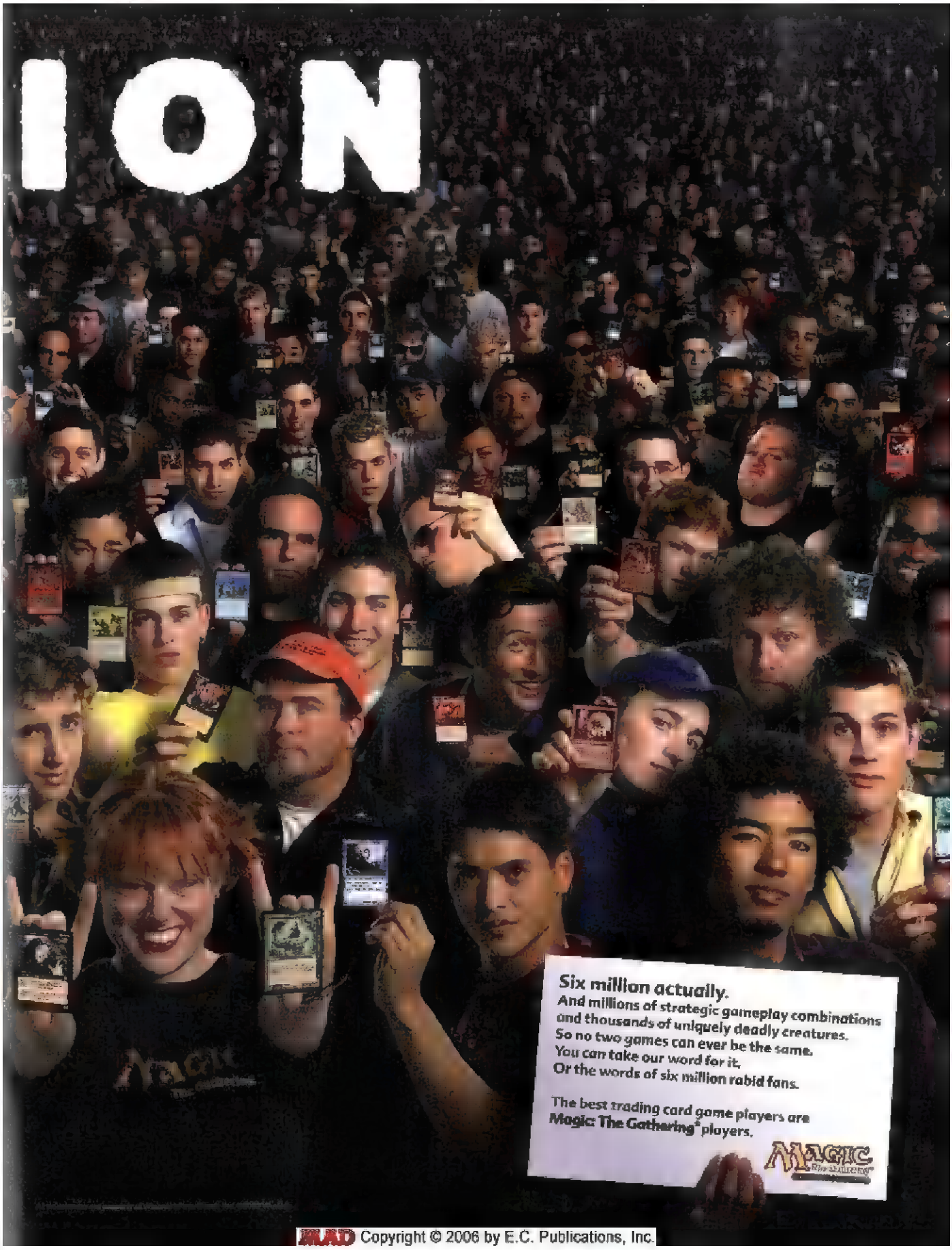
ION
Six million actually.
And millions of strategic gameplay combinations
and thousands of uniquely deadly creatures.
So no two games can ever be the same.
You can take our word for it.
Or the words of six million rabid fans.
The best trading card game players are
Magic: The Gathering® players.
MAGIC

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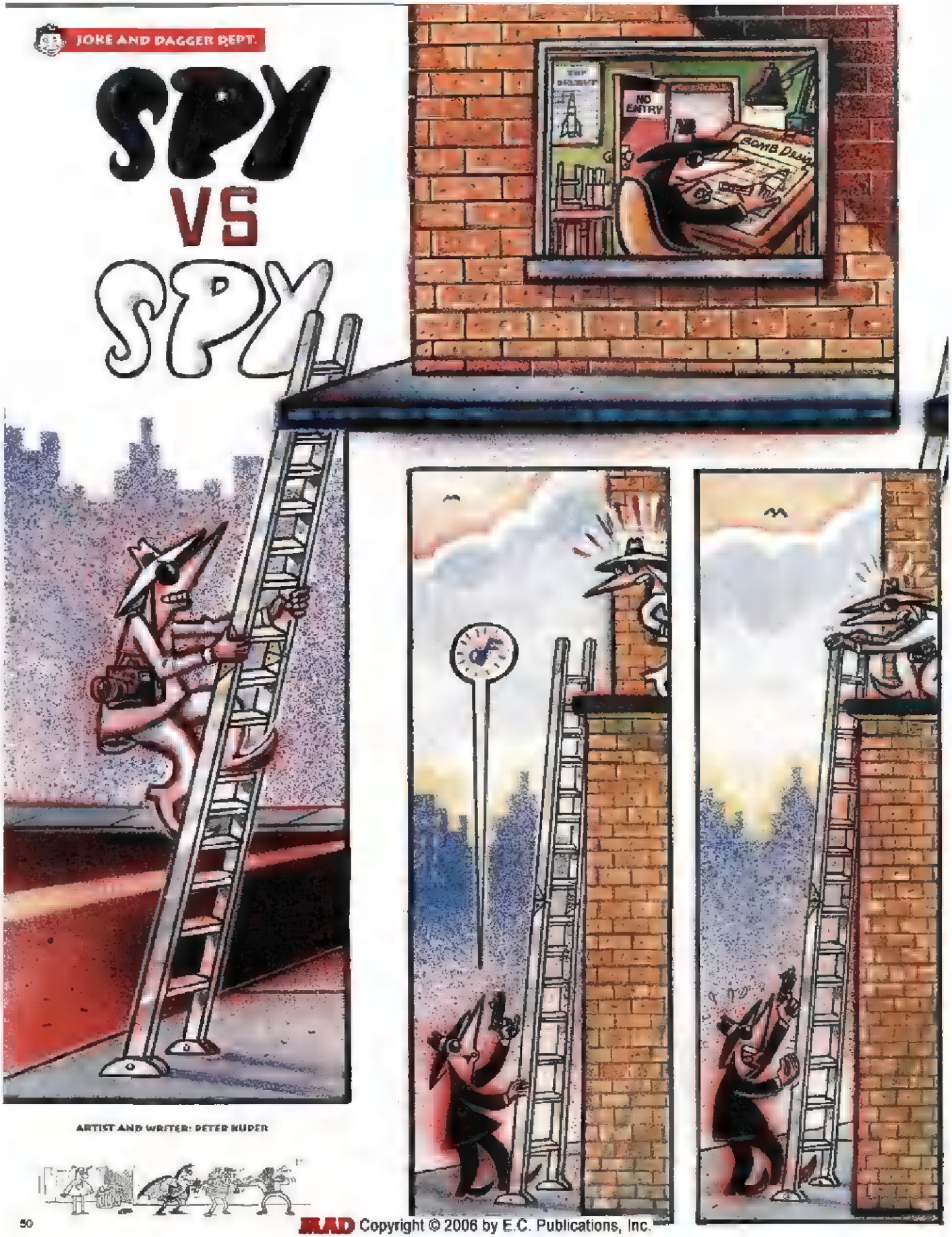
JOKE AND DAGGER DEPT.

SPY VS SPY



ARTIST AND WRITER: PETER KUPER

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BATMAN
DARK TOMORROW
THE STORY THUS FAR: GANG WAR RAGES IN THE STREETS OF GOTHAM CITY...
WHILE AT ARKHAM, POISON IVY, JOKER, KILLER CROC & OTHER INMATES ARE RUNNING THE ASYLUM.

Inspired by DC comics, Batman: Dark Tomorrow pits a tougher, darker Dark Knight against The Joker, Mr. Freeze, Poison Ivy, Killer Croc, Black Mask, The Ventriloquist & Scarface, and

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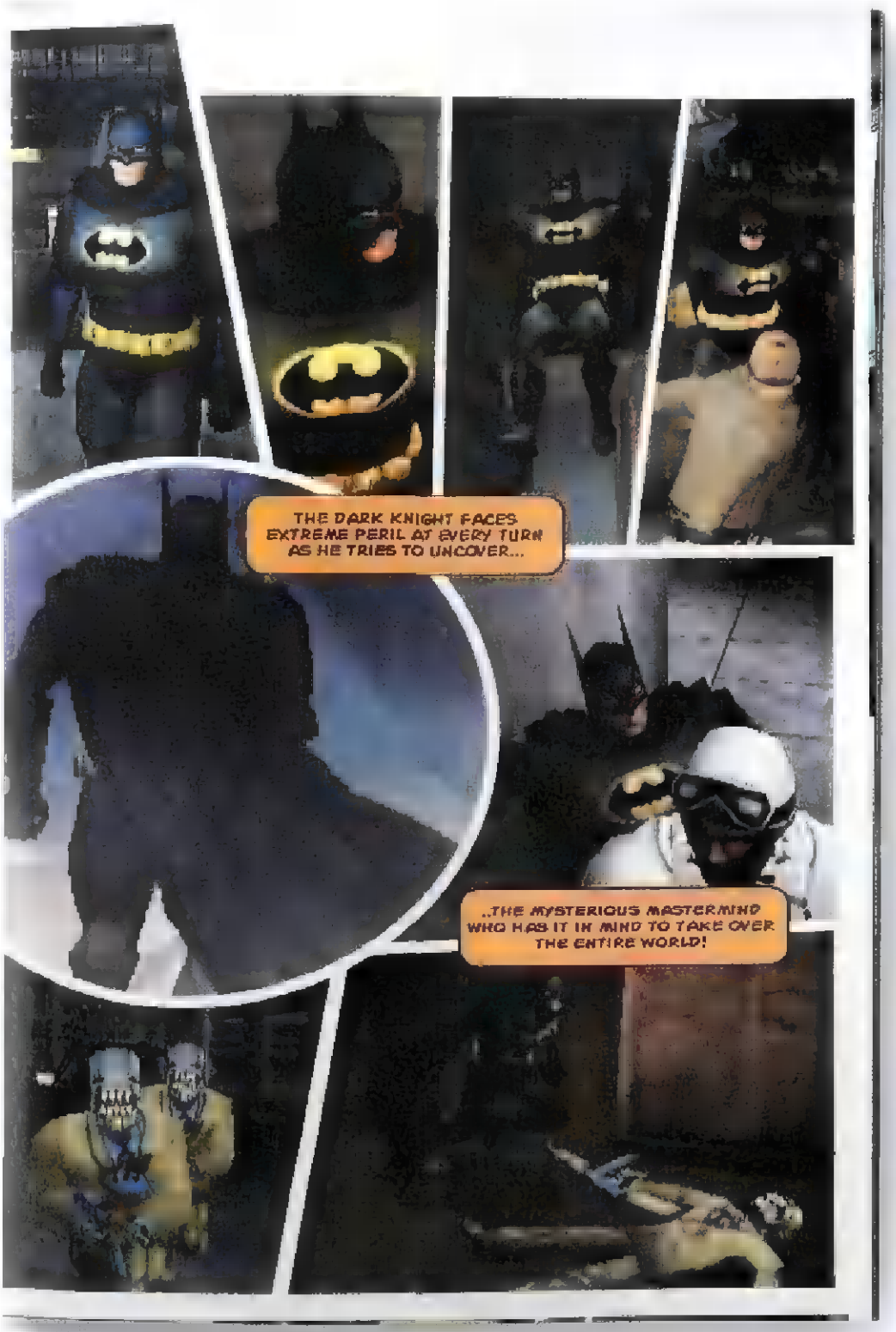
THE DARK KNIGHT FACES EXTREME PERIL AT EVERY TURN AS HE TRIES TO UNCOVER...
..THE MYSTERIOUS MASTERMIND WHO HAS IT IN MIND TO TAKE OVER THE ENTIRE WORLD!

coming soon
XBOX
coming soon
GAMECUBE
Nintendo
coming soon
TEEN
T
Violence
ESRB

more, written by scott peterson (batman writer) and kenji terada (final fantasy i, ii & iii). collectors' edition pc comic is included to set the stage. but to batman, this is no game!

KEMCO

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ALL JAFFEE DEPT.

GOOD LORD! IT'S YET ANOTHER RIDICULOUS EPISODE OF...

SNAPPY ANSWERS TO

ARTIST AND WRITER: AL JAFFEE

Will they call that an error?
Wheeties THE SEXY CEREAL
Dr Pepsia Cola
BUSH BEER DRINK! DON'T THINK!
No! This is "soccer night," so the players can't touch the ball with their hands!
Of course not! It was a brilliant play... just not for his team!
No, he botched it on purpose to make the opposing team overconfident!
Are you going to ask for a rematch?
Of course, if he doesn't mind hitting a guy in a wheelchair!
Yes! Maybe he can pound my face back straight again!
Yes, as soon as I ask my doctor to match my organs with the body parts they should be attached to!
Do hockey players always have to be violent?
They're not violent, they're just helping each other stay awake during this low scoring, dreadfully boring game!
They're not violent! A full-speed, head-on collision is just the quickest way to stop on ice skates!
No! There's a blood drive tonight and they're just doing their part!

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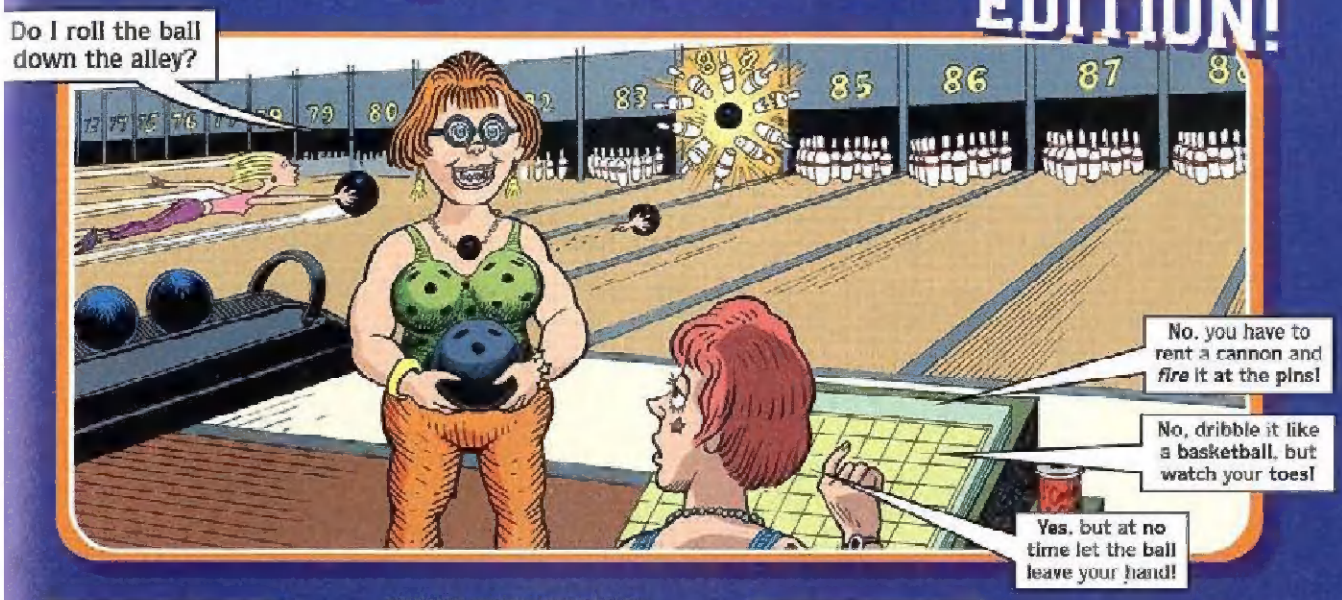
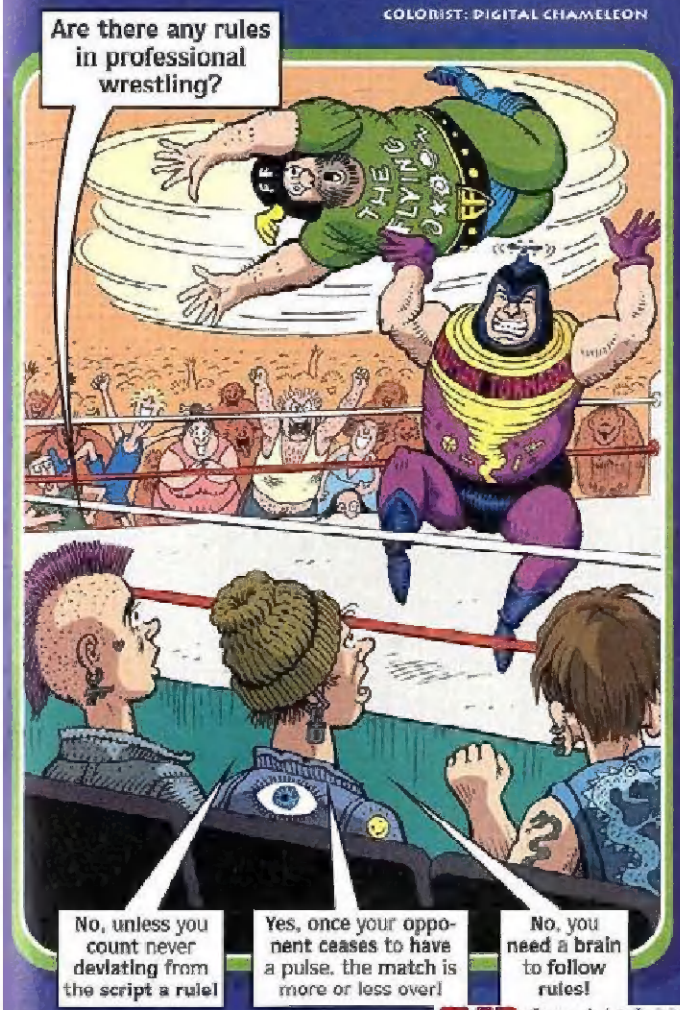
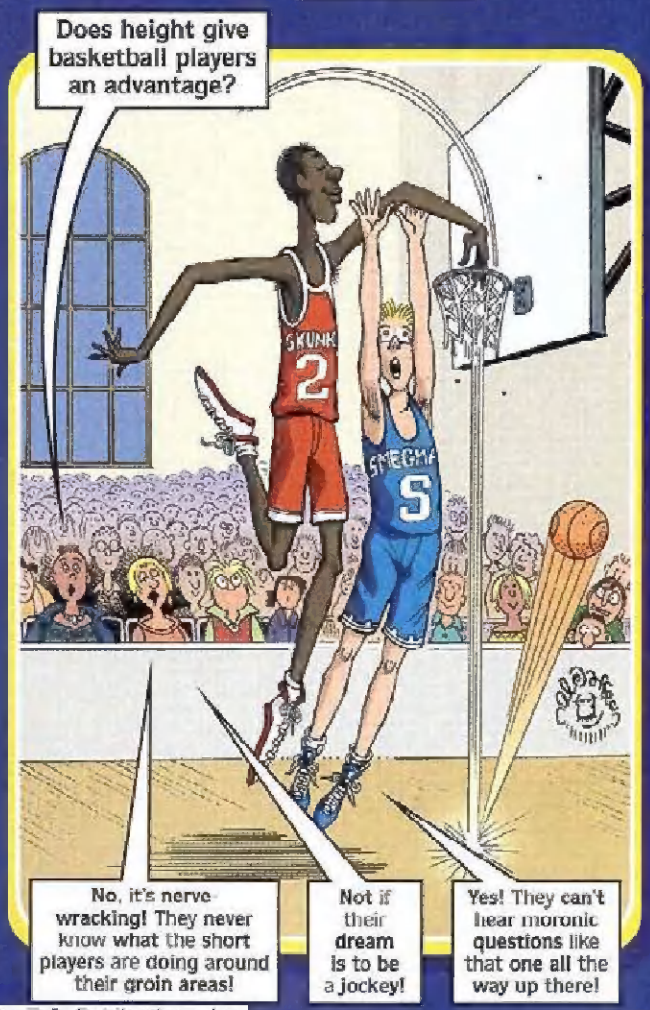
STUPID QUESTIONS SPECIAL SPORTS EDITION!


Do I roll the ball down the alley?
No, you have to rent a cannon and *fire* it at the pins!
No, dribble it like a basketball, but watch your toes!
Yes, but at no time let the ball leave your hand!

COLORIST: DIGITAL CHAMELEON


Are there any rules in professional wrestling?
THE FLYING
No, unless you count never deviating from the script a rule!
Yes, once your opponent ceases to have a pulse, the match is more or less over!
No, you need a brain to follow rules!


Does height give basketball players an advantage?
SKUNK
2
No, it's nerve wracking! They never know what the short players are doing around their groin areas!
Not if their dream is to be a jockey!
Yes! They can't hear moronic questions like that one all the way up there!

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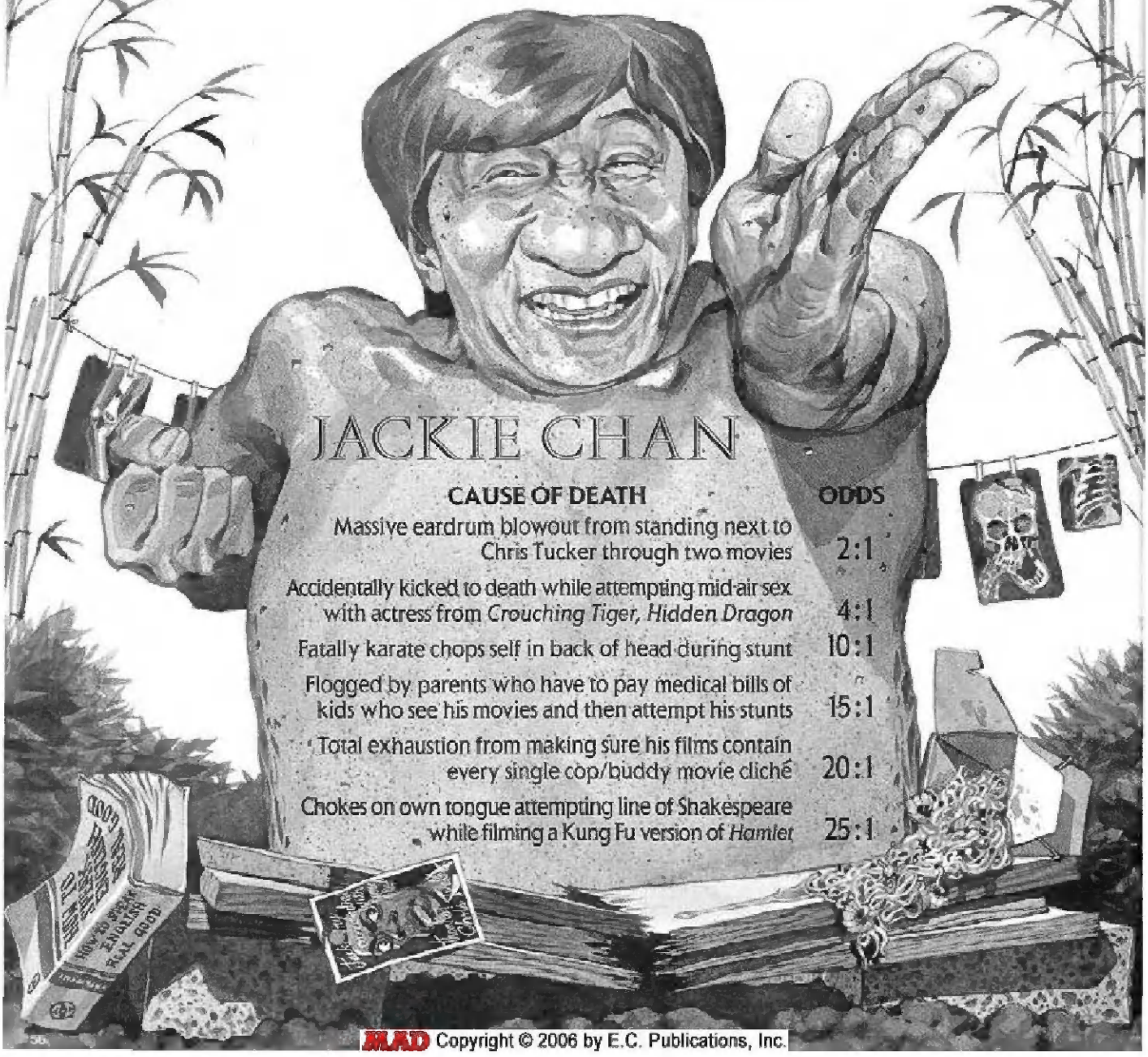
GRIEVING LAS VEGAS DEPT.

MAD's CELEBRITY CAUSE-OF-DEATH BETTING ODDS

Our team of crack oddsmakers gives you the latest Vegas line on how one of today's biggest stars will karate kick the bucket!

THIS MONTH'S FUTURE STUNT CORPSE:


JACKIE CHAN
CAUSE OF DEATH
ODDS
Massive eardrum blowout from standing next to Chris Tucker through two movies
2:1
Accidentally kicked to death while attempting mid-air sex with actress from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*
4:1
Fatally karate chops self in back of head during stunt
10:1
Flogged by parents who have to pay medical bills of kids who see his movies and then attempt his stunts
15:1
Total exhaustion from making sure his films contain every single cop/buddy movie cliché
20:1
Chokes on own tongue attempting line of Shakespeare while filming a Kung Fu version of *Hamlet*
25:1

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HOW SHOULD THE MOST CORRUPT BUSINESS EXECUTIVES BE PUNISHED?

HERE WE GO WITH ANOTHER RIDICULOUS

MAD FOLD-IN

It seems every time we open the newspaper, another executive is being investigated for embezzling money, dumping stock or just being all-around sleazy. It's really getting out of control! How can society put an end to it? What punishment is harsh enough to dissuade the corrupt individuals? To find out what we think is an appropriate punishment, fold page in as shown.

FOLD PAGE OVER LIKE THIS!

A FOLD PAGE OVER LEFT

B FOLD BACK SO THAT "A" MEETS "B"

MANY BUSINESSMEN ARE CROOKS AND WE'D LIKE THEM RESIDING IN JAIL. THEIR LAWYERS WILL CAMPAIGN FROM EVERY LEGAL ANGLE TO KEEP 'EM OUT. BUT THE BEST THING WE COULD AND SHOULD DO IS PUSH FOR MUCH STRONGER LAWS THAT WOULD ADMINISTER JUSTICE TO EVERY INVESTOR AND CORPORATION

A

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B

JUSTICE LEAGUE™
INJUSTICE FOR ALL

MIDWAY

JUSTICE LEAGUE COMES TO THE GAME BOY® ADVANCE

When global catastrophe strikes and the world is in peril, the call goes out for the Justice League, the greatest super heroes of all time. Fighting for truth, justice and freedom, *Superman*, *Batman*, *Wonder Woman*, *The Flash*, *Green Lantern*, *Hawkgirl* and *Martian Manhunter* have banded together to fight for the common good against the *Injustice League* in an all-new action adventure title for the Game Boy® Advance. Featuring 12 levels of non-stop action, gamers will overcome dangerous obstacles, an onslaught of villains and discover power-ups on the path to victory!

GAME PREVIEW AT:
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GAME BOY ADVANCE

EVERYONE
E
Violence
ESRB

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(s02)

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